

*A Practical Guide for Trustees, Faculty,
Administrators, and Policymakers*

HOW TO RUN A COLLEGE



Brian C. Mitchell

AND

W. Joseph King

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Brian C. Mitchell
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W. Joseph King

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*To our wives,
Maryjane and Leigh, who make big ideas seem
like an adventure worth taking*

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Preface

In 1934, J. H. Reynolds, president of Hendrix College, wrote in the *New York Times*, “America has perhaps 400 small colleges. A reduction of this number to one-third would undergird and strengthen American higher education, giving solidarity, power, and higher standards.”¹

In 2016, there were almost 4,000 nonprofit institutions in the United States with significant variations in type, purpose, and scale serving more than 20.5 million students.² Our decentralized higher education community is awash with problems and in the throes of significant change. Yet this is a seminal moment in its development.

Colleges are confusing, bewildering, and complex places with storied traditions, antiquated governance practices, and competing constituencies. Even worse, however, is that many of the key leadership groups—especially trustees but including faculty and senior staff—are ill equipped to advise and govern a modern college or university. The end result is an erosion of good will among key stakeholders, often leading to institutional inertia, and in the extreme, debilitating chaos. These glaring internal inefficiencies, communication breakdowns, and the overriding sense of cultural inertia on many campuses are also set against a backdrop of changing consumer preferences, high sticker prices, declining demand, massive tuition discounting, aging infrastructure, technological and pedagogical alternatives, and state and federal political pressures.

That having been said, the American residential college to which President Reynolds referred in 1934 remains the foundation upon which other higher education sectors are based,

including modern research universities, especially at the undergraduate level. It can be resilient under able leadership.

When we met at a conference of private college and university presidents in Fort Worth several years ago, we were both startled at the similarities in our views on the future of American higher education. As our discussions deepened, we decided that it was important to put our thoughts on paper. We agreed that these thoughts would be tied to the historic foundation upon which higher education is built. They had to convey with considerable urgency that colleges and universities must look past the way that they have always operated. We determined that the sky is not falling but that the pressure placed upon higher education to change and adapt has never been greater.

We wrote this book as an exercise through which to imagine the possible. We knew that the key to unlock the collective wisdom of the change agents and thought partners spread across higher education was not found in recently published monographs, although there are some good books available. This was new territory since most recent literature focuses on process, the types of transformation, ideology, and the programs or the tactics. While we cite our sources with considerable care, much of what we believe comes from the experiences that we have shared, the training of our mentors, and the wisdom of committed colleagues. We trust that the end result is a thoughtful and candid assessment of what to do to move America's colleges and universities through the twenty-first century.

In this book, we offer an optimistic assessment based upon frank and stark conclusions about what colleges must do—and not do—to remain relevant in the twenty-first century. We look not only at how they can survive but also at why they must survive. We begin with a fundamental premise, namely, that colleges and universities must evolve and adapt by modernizing their practices, monetizing their assets, focusing on core educational strategies, and linking themselves explicitly to the modern world.

President Reynolds's argument is a challenge to American higher education. No longer can colleges operate behind their college gates in a world they wish actually existed. We offer an analysis of how these colleges operate, what works, and what must change.

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Introduction

The American commitment to higher education grew out of the same “Blessings of Liberty” as the revolution itself.¹ Colonial and frontier leaders held to the Enlightenment belief that education was a key to citizenship. There were just nine colleges founded in the colonial period.² However, the revolutionaries quickly established nineteen more from 1782 to 1802.³ In the nineteenth century, the pace increased with the expansion led by Protestant denominations and the Morrill acts, which established land-grant colleges. Hundreds of colleges were founded as new states and territories were added to the Union. It is a testament to Enlightenment thinking that many of these colleges were established in the howling wilderness. Nevertheless, they proved critical to the American enterprise.

This growth continued throughout the twentieth century, especially in the postwar periods. By 1980, there were some 1,500 public four-year institutions, 1,700 private four-year institutions, and more than 1,000 public and private two-year institutions.⁴ High school graduation rates reached their zenith and plateaued in 2012.⁵ Even with record-high enrollments, state and federal support began to wane. State support decreased 26 percent from

1990 to 2010.⁶ Federal support for Pell Grants increased to a high \$41.7 billion in 2011 but subsequently dropped to \$28.9 billion in 2015.⁷ Meanwhile, costs rose significantly. The Higher Education Cost Index (HEPI) increased from 25.6 in 1961 to 313.3 in 2015. In the same period, the Consumer Price Index rose from 30.3 to 241.1.⁸ Costs at private institutions increased at an even higher rate, with doctoral institutions ending 2015 with a HEPI of 375.5 and baccalaureate institutions with a HEPI of 328.4.⁹

The past fifteen years have been especially bleak. Costs have risen more than 50 percent since 2000, while median household income has declined from \$57,730 in 2000 to \$53,657 in 2014.¹⁰ There is a growing consumer revolt against prices, particularly at private colleges and universities, which have seen their tuition more than double since 2000.¹¹ Many students are especially sensitive to price and thus have flocked to community colleges (42 percent in fall 2014) as an alternative for the first two years.¹² Forty-six percent of all students report completing some coursework at a community college.¹³ Finally, college enrollment of graduating high school students has declined from 68.6 percent in 2008 to 65.9 percent in 2013. This trend is even starker for low-income families, for whom enrollment rates have declined from 55.9 percent to 45.5 percent during the same period.¹⁴

This confluence of factors creates a bewildering and paralyzing situation. For those inside and outside higher education, it seems like an unprecedented time. Because of this perception, solutions are particularly elusive or simply not forthcoming. In fact, American higher education has indeed been through two similar periods: the Depression of 1873-79 (1870s) and the Great Depression (1930s). The death toll of the Civil War, now calculated at 750,000, greatly amplified the effect of the first economic calamity.¹⁵ The extremity of the second is indeed without parallel. Both periods produced similar or greater stress than the Great Recession and its aftermath (2010s).

A brief study of colleges and universities during these periods provides examples of institutional innovation that are

relevant today. These periods generated hundreds of college closures and mergers. Even in relatively positive economic periods (e.g., 1960–94), private four-year colleges closed at a rate of six per year.¹⁶ The process of making these decisions generated stronger governance structures and efficiencies. These can be studied through the correspondence, press reports, contracts, and other documents generated during the process. More importantly, these changes document the willingness of institutions to adapt and innovate during times of great (“unprecedented”) stress.

In 1873, one of the authors’ (King) alma mater, Southwestern University, was formed from the merger of four institutions: Rutersville College, Wesleyan College, McKenzie College, and Soule University. Martin Ruter, who was president of Allegheny College, left for Texas in 1837 to found the first college in 1840. He was compelled by a letter from Col. William Barret Travis published in the *New York Christian Advocate*, calling for the training of “educated and talented young preachers” in the new Republic of Texas.¹⁷ Various Methodist educators and missionaries founded the other three institutions in course of the next twenty years. Soule University was the strongest of the four institutions, with 150 students enrolled before the outbreak of the Civil War.¹⁸ It reopened in 1868, with a new president, Francis Asbury Mood. However, the local plantations were bankrupted by emancipation. The university, with only 26 students, was \$17,000 in debt and in constant fear of another yellow fever outbreak.¹⁹

In this morass, Mood struggled to find a way forward. In 1869, he laid out a plan for the merger of the four institutions. His vision called for “the organization, location, and endowment of a University for the South-West.”²⁰ He presented his plan to the Board of Trustees and later recalled, “there was never another day in which I could have succeeded with the board as I did except the one on which action was taken—action which sealed the final doom of Soule University, but at the same time laid the foundation for its reappearance in more desirable and

promising shape elsewhere.” Success with the board was one thing; next he had to succeed with the five Methodist Conferences in Texas represented by the Committee on Education. Mood reported that they

greeted me with the disagreeable statement that “they would not touch it.” I replied confidently, because I felt certain of the result, why I cannot tell, “Oh, yes, you will” and proceeded at once to elaborate the plan and urge the matter. The committee became convinced, became enthusiastic; they reported favorably; the enthusiasm became infective and the scheme was heartily and unanimously adopted by the Conference. This fired the heart of the good Bishop, who followed the vote by one of his terse, earnest and eloquent appeals for zeal and unity in the movement.²¹

Three “educational conventions,” which explored every aspect of the proposal, followed. Considering the desperate straits of the four colleges, finances were discussed in depth. The recommendation was that \$500,000 (in 1871 dollars) would be needed. The buildings and equipment would require \$100,000, while the permanent endowment would require \$400,000. Back at Soule, there was plenty of time for discord: “If Dr. Mood gives up the college . . . it will operate very much against the school. So many speak of leaving. I never would have come here if I had thought he would have left.” Nevertheless, Mood stayed true to his vision. “I have received several letters from the members of the other Conferences and all seem to despair of the University movement unless I will take hold of it and succeed in carrying up to the coming sessions of the Conferences something tangible wherewith to encourage them to hope for the success of the plan I have for two years urged upon the Church.”²²

The university’s main building was donated by the people of Georgetown, Texas, in 1873. The new central university, merging the four institutions, followed soon thereafter with the full support of the five Methodist Conferences. Mood moved to

Georgetown in the fall of 1873 and recorded, “I was not enthusiastic by any means, but I was hopeful.” The university would prosper, for the most part, until the Great Depression, when it was saved once again from crushing debt—\$363,452.52—by an extraordinary effort, which included a harrowing “midnight ride” back from Houston on February 28, 1937, with a commitment that would leave it, on March 15, debt free and with “a free-standing endowment of about \$600,000,”²³ much as the Second Educational Convention in 1871 had recommended.

In 1930, Lombard College faced the direct and abject effects of the stock market crash of the previous year. Lombard was founded in 1851 by Universalists in Galesburg, Illinois. It was notably the first college in the country chartered as coeducational. While it had a healthy rivalry with Knox College, also in Galesburg, it had grown steadily for eighty years. However, in the spring of 1930, it found itself insolvent, with debt of \$105,000.²⁴ On Tuesday, April 1, 1930, George G. Davis, president of Lombard, approached Albert Britt, president of Knox College, about a merger. Representatives of the two colleges met the next day, and the Executive Committees of the two institutions’ Boards of Trustees met the following Saturday, April 5. On April 7, Britt sent a letter to the Knox faculty recommending the merger: “That we look with favor upon an appropriate union with Lombard College and authorize the President to appoint a joint committee of Trustees and Faculty to investigate and to formulate a plan to be submitted to the full Board.”²⁵

On April 8, the *New York Times* announced the planning of a merger. Davis was quoted as saying, “Cooperation, instead of division, is a need in education as elsewhere.” Britt struck a positive note, saying that “[the colleges were] actuated by a desire to improve and strengthen the educational opportunity to be offered to our respective students and our entire constituency.”²⁶ However, none of the details had been worked out. Davis immediately sent a letter to the Lombard Alumni Association

discussing the dire circumstances, including the substantial liabilities, and the opportunity that a Knox merger provided. A Knox trustee dutifully forwarded a copy to Albert Britt, noting that it was “best to consider it confidential.”²⁷ The Knox business office responded with a letter to Davis on April 25 detailing its understanding of the immediate deficit, approximately \$50,000, mainly in payroll obligations. Britt followed with a letter on May 2 addressing the financial issue directly: “We can not, however, obligate Knox College for the payment of current obligations or for the guaranteeing immediately or ultimately of other debts or obligations of whatever sort.”²⁸

Clearly, this merger was not to be a panacea for Lombard College. For the students, the news was better. President Britt welcomed all of them, saying, “It is our desire that Lombard students shall find as friendly a home and as pleasant associations on the Knox campus as they have at Lombard.”²⁹ Their \$200 tuition was held the same as at Lombard, and they were invited to apply for scholarships. Even the Greek Associations were considered one by one for their fit at Knox, and in the end, the college found itself with one new sorority and one new fraternity. Three faculty members were also invited to join the ranks at Knox, including, significantly, Dean C. M. Poor, who would replace the retiring dean at Knox.³⁰ In concluding his May 22 letter to the trustees, Albert Britt wrote, “It is the judgment of those of us who have been closest in the college that the appointment of Dean Poor will do more than anything else to convince the community of Galesburg and friends of Lombard elsewhere that there is genuine good will in the negotiations from the Knox side.” In less than two months, the merger was complete.

As the Great Depression worsened, even the strongest institutions were becoming ever more desperate. In May 1933, Robert Maynard Hutchins, president of the University of Chicago, approached Walter Dill Scott, president of Northwestern University, with a plan to merge the institutions. Both institutions had made substantial budget reductions in the previous years, so much

so that they found “the impossibility of instituting further economies without damaging the quality of their individual educational programs, along with the likely difficulties of obtaining additional funds in the future.” Hutchins presented the merger partly based on the financial advantages but also on the possibility of creating “the greatest educational enterprise in the world.”³¹ Scott was enthusiastic about the plan, agreeing with the financial and educational benefits that Hutchins described. The financial benefits could not be understated: the combined institution might realize savings as high as \$1.7 million. According to the US Bureau of Education, the average full professor in 1934 made \$2,336, down from \$3,030 just four years earlier.³² In those terms, the possible savings were enormous.

The institutions formed a joint study committee, which released its first report on July 6. It contemplated “a unified educational program under a single administration. The two boards of trustees were to be combined, with equal representation from each university. Although a single alumni organization was contemplated, no mention was made of what would happen to the universities’ athletic teams.”³³ The academic program was quite a bit more complicated. In brief, all graduate work would be conducted on the South Side (Chicago’s campus), with professional programs conducted on Northwestern’s downtown campus, and undergraduate programs conducted on Northwestern’s pastoral campus in Evanston. The medical programs would be combined but would continue to reside on the two campuses. The proposed name for the merged institution was “The Chicago Universities.”

The name alone was enough to incite significant negative responses from the Northwestern alumni. More substantive criticism followed. As discussions continued, it became clear that Hutchins would not give up Chicago’s undergraduate college. Sarah Barnes observed that “Northwestern faculty members had little difficulty envisioning their school being downgraded to the status of a junior college, while Hutchins’s college, through

its association with the university's graduate divisions, garnered all the prestige." With the Northwestern faculty nearing revolt, the death of Northwestern trustee Melvin Traylor, chair of the merger committee, was enough to seal the fate of the proposal. Even in the end, Northwestern's President Scott wrote, "It is a great regret to me that conditions were such that it could not become a reality . . . the more I studied the merger the more desirable I found it to be."³⁴ Of course, Northwestern and Chicago both survived the Great Depression and are two of the nation's strongest research universities. Both are members of the Association of American Universities. Their combined endowments exceed \$14 billion. However, they continued to struggle in the Great Depression, reducing salaries and staffing until World War II.

In 1934, J. H. Reynolds, president of Hendrix College, wrote in the *New York Times*, "In developing her colleges America in the last half-century has in effect, adopted the slogan 'bigger and better,' on the theory that if anything became bigger, the better would follow as a matter of course. In recent years, however, there has arisen doubt whether bigger and better are synonymous educational terms and whether there are not values in the smaller grouping of college students that might well be conserved." He goes on to discuss Hendrix's recent merger with two smaller institutions, calling it "a consolidation movement designed to preserve these values in the small college while attaining the financial stability of the large." Specifically, the merger created a somewhat larger Hendrix with a savings of \$60,000, which, as previously discussed, was a substantial sum in 1934. Beyond savings through consolidation, Reynolds discusses the federation of colleges at the University of Toronto, where "undergraduates enjoy the domestic, religious, social, and educational advantages of the small college along with the stimulating intellectual life of the university." He also highlights the Claremont Colleges, then consisting only of Pomona and Scripps Colleges, which shared library and science buildings.³⁵

The purpose of these case studies is not to advocate mergers, closures, or consortia but to advocate a timely willingness to consider innovative changes for the betterment of the institution. Our fundamental premise is that colleges and universities must evolve and adapt by modernizing their practices, monetizing their assets, focusing on core educational strategies, and linking explicitly to the modern world. No longer can institutions operate behind the college gates in a world that they wish actually existed. We offer an analysis of how these colleges operate, what works, and what must change. We do this in a context of historical understanding that American colleges and universities have never been static. They have responded repeatedly to changes in the socioeconomic environment. They have faced periods at least as challenging as the current period and have found ways to adapt and thrive.

Unlike other analyses written in recent years, we define explicit steps and strategies for a proactive approach. This approach is driven by a strong commitment to shared governance and a requirement that all bodies of this governance take an active and informed role and responsibility. We advocate active management and board leadership that encourages an ongoing “listening tour” of key campus stakeholders, including faculty, students, alumni, parents, and the community. We also advocate the development of a sustainable plan for ongoing dialogue among the governors in each group and with the broader community of stakeholders. In the examples discussed, the ideas were not hatched in secrecy and discussed only in boardrooms. They involved broad swaths of constituents, working within the structures of shared governance, to thoroughly consider the proposition and its implications. In some cases, this process occurred with remarkable speed. Nevertheless, it was thorough, thoughtful, and inclusive, with the mission of the institution always at the forefront. If we accomplish nothing else, we hope that this book will serve as a primer for that process, which is so critical to the future of higher education.

Chapter 1

Governance and Management

We begin with how colleges and universities govern themselves. A college can move forward only if those who run it are educated about the work they do, know their responsibilities, respect their role and that of those who also lead, and create measures by which to demonstrate their effectiveness.

The Association of Governing Boards (AGB) provides the most current, authoritative data. AGB found in 2016 that the overall size of college boards has not changed since 2010. It reported that about twelve trustees on average form a public college or university board, whereas the average number increased to twenty-nine individuals on private college and university boards. Since 1969, the percentage of women has increased from 12 percent to approximately 32 percent. Further, racial and ethnic minorities represent 23.9 percent of public and 13.5 percent of private college boards. Removing minority-serving institutions from consideration, the number of minorities represented drops to 17 and 11.1 percent of public and private boards, respectively.¹

Most board members—66.2 percent at public and 67.2 percent of private college boards—were between the ages of 50 and 69.

Surprisingly, the average length of term for public trustees was 5.8 years, whereas the average for private college trustees was only 3.6 years. Public college boards meet on average 7.4 times per year; boards meet three to four times per year at private colleges. The number of terms a board member can serve and the role of emeriti trustees vary widely.²

The greatest challenge facing American higher education today is how to professionalize governance. Governance has the most dramatic impact on how to prepare for the change that comes when a campus community reaches a critical moment in its development. Can American higher education navigate through uncharted waters if the leadership relies on an unprepared, inexperienced captain and crew?

The dustups on boards of trustees are almost too numerous to mention. Some are self-inflicted, like the very public squabble between the president and the board at Suffolk University.³ Others demonstrate the importance of optics when leadership decisions violate the sense of collective ownership, for example, the battle over closure at Sweet Briar College or the board's firing of Teresa Sullivan as president of the University of Virginia.⁴ A few are "asleep at the switch" moments, as occurred at Birmingham Southern when the board's fiduciary responsibility collapsed.⁵ Others may be action specific, like board members influencing admissions at the University of Illinois.⁶ But whatever the reason, the failure to govern well has profound, lasting implications for the institution.⁷

For all the complaints about heavy liberal bias ideologically, a college campus is inherently a very conservative place, driven by process. Political pundits often see campus communities through a political lens that casts good versus bad as liberal or conservative, depending upon the pundit's bias.⁸ But many of the most extreme battles fought each academic year are over process, territory, and the pace of change. Nothing weakens a college's future more than a debilitating process fight played out on the battlefield—and sometimes publicly—over decades. How

the governing constituencies relate to one another matters deeply, and how they act on their role as an authoritative voice often determines the nature and intensity of a potential implosion.

Predictably, the Great Recession uncovered fundamental operational and structural weaknesses in how colleges are managed and run. Collegiate governance is always presented as a three-legged stool: administration, faculty, and board of trustees. The administration manages the college. The faculty has responsibility for the academic program. The trustees are the fiduciary stewards, who approve policy, and hire, nurture, and replace the president. The institutional buck generally stops with the trustees—and therein lies the problem.

As the long recession dominated the first years of the new century, few institutions proved nimble enough to respond to the deep impact on their revenue streams, the strength of their admissions pool, the willingness of consumers to meet rising tuition, shifting demographics, and growing income inequality. Most institutions powered down their institutional engines to a whisper, whether tuition- or endowment-driven.⁹ Projects under way would move forward, accreditation reviews would proceed, and institutional milestones would continue to be met.

But few college and university presidents had the courage to call on their boards of trustees or work with their faculties to think strategically about the long term. Even fewer followed the time-worn advice of the noted architect Daniel Burnham: “Make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men’s blood and probably will not themselves be realized.”¹⁰ The result was fewer faculty appointments, increased use of adjuncts on many campuses, and depressed salary increases.¹¹ Further, new “efficiency” measures often seemed more like death by a thousand cuts.¹²

As the clock ticked, there were some promising changes. What students learn became the dominant policy question before governing boards. How shared governance reacted to new pedagogy—and the vision that emerged from the approaches selected—separated whether an institution moved forward or

continued to tread water. Incremental governance and negotiated inertia only highlighted the failure of most colleges to differentiate their message, thereby separating themselves from their peers with anything even remotely resembling a crisp and well-communicated distinctiveness.

Then and now, it comes down to leadership, which starts with the board of trustees. Good boards must be competent stewards. Competency only comes with efforts to educate wisely. Boards must understand the complexity of their responsibilities by fully grasping and appreciating the mission, the organizational structure, their role within shared governance, the need for outreach to a wide array of constituencies, and the necessity of defining their governance role carefully and sensitively. What trustees educate themselves about is far more important than whether they can check off the “stewardship” box through reports to committees and periodic retreats. Education must be both strategic and systemic.¹³ One of the biggest surprises for those new to college governance is how the system works. American colleges operate on a system of shared governance that includes roles for the board of trustees, administrative leadership, and faculty. At the best-governed institutions, the groups understand their roles, including the fiduciary, management, and programming duties of each group. This mandates what is typically a healthy tension. While shared governance fails for many reasons, the most likely cause is one group’s overstepping its boundary.

The problem is, of course, that these boundaries shift with interpretations of acceptable and responsible behavior that vary in each campus culture. Most private colleges and universities, for example, have large and unwieldy boards.¹⁴ There are variations among public and private boards on a wide variety of issues, including how they are financed, what state laws and regulations they must meet, and the level of public subsidy. A few have a small operating committee vested with much of the power. In these settings, the larger board is more ceremonial and honorary.

Most boards have an executive committee charged with oversight, especially between formal board meetings. Some use their executive committees to centralize trustee governance.¹⁵

The most common problem is size, however, with boards often numbering more than forty individuals, often with another large group of emeriti trustees added to this number. In these settings, board meetings, with their attendant internal politics, often are little more than structured report-outs devoid of drama before an audience too large to fit the boardroom. It breeds complacency and mediocrity.

The membership of the board depends on the type of institution, with college trustees selected to meet a broad array of perceived expertise. Members are dominated by alumni and often still characterized as “alumni” trustees and “other.” They may be selected for specific expertise, diversity, political acumen, and financial savvy or donor capacity. Occasionally, boards maintain some level of faculty and student representation, at least on some of their standing committees. The governance committees of these boards spend countless hours deciding how to put these pieces together to match available talent to the college’s strategic needs.¹⁶

In attempting to balance differing demands to round out a board, trustees have made an easy choice to match these needs to existing board structure. It would be far better and more efficient if boards of trustees were much smaller at private colleges and universities, as is often the case at public institutions. They should be chosen to match their role in shared governance: to set policy, act as fiduciaries, and craft a climate for the institution’s success. Harvard figured it out a long time ago.¹⁷ Large boards can and should exist to meet advisory needs and encourage donations and alumni support, but they inhibit institutional flexibility. In governance, a voting board should have no more than twelve active members.

There is an important difference between a board that governs and one that approves policy emerging from robust

campus-wide discussion. A second, larger group of advisors can play an important role in diminishing the insularity that characterizes most board meetings. This group provides an opportunity for faculty, administrators, trustees, and advisors to meet and exchange ideas. It broadens discussions about the competitive world of higher education, the history and traditions of the institution, faculty interest in program design, and the capacity and creativity within the institution to support change. The smaller oversight group of trustees could participate in and monitor these discussions closely, since many of the best ideas would emerge from these interactions. These broader community-wide discussions could ground an institution. It could also provide the foundation for a palpable and sustainable sense of momentum without the process-driven, repetitive reports that squeeze the lifeblood out of most board meetings.

These broader campus discussions can provide policy options that proceed through standing committees—now more broadly inclusive of the campus community—to the reduced membership of the overseer’s board for review and vote, where necessary. The committees themselves should reflect what the college must get done. Whenever possible, older standing committees should decrease in number. It’s far less important for a board to meet its responsibility through an overreaching committee structure than it is for a well-informed board to respond to coherent policy recommendations proposed by the campus community following a well-defined, aspirational strategic plan and a governance group well-schooled on higher education issues.

Put in other terms, it’s time to end the confusion over who’s on first by matching duties, board size, and campus inclusiveness to a more creative and flexible format, one in which all players have the opportunity to make their case. In policy, boards too often confuse voting privileges with the last word, creating incremental change when higher education demands something far more substantial and organic. The best way to manage a

college or university—accounting for scale—is to put the “sharing” back into shared governance.

If a purposeful education is the grounded center of good leadership, the faculty also has a critical role to play. As a group, the faculty is the only participant in shared governance who can legitimately lay claim to their pivotal role as the institution’s historian/“keeper of the flame.” They live, re-create, and sustain the campus long after administrators and trustees move on. This makes them almost by definition process driven, conservative, and suspicious of governance. Yet since the faculty is at the heart of an educational program, their role is undeniable. What faculty does not always appreciate is the power they wield in shared governance, well beyond issues such as tenure. Arguably, the central policy question facing college governance reflects the importance of faculty’s role in shared governance: “What do our students learn?” The answer shapes the fiscal, social, and cultural response on a campus.¹⁸

It is critical, therefore, that the faculty thinks carefully about the role of faculty leadership in shared governance. The ideal candidates to work with the board should have deep campus-wide support, sufficient gravitas, and an understanding of the world beyond the college gates. Faculty leaders should be more senior; be compensated, whether by cash or reduced work load; and have a full understanding of how a strong faculty voice can contribute to good governance. They must rise above internal politics, “trust but verify” the policy and program direction proposed, be open to change, and educate and advocate for faculty interests.

As a whole, the faculty must put its best candidates forward in governance. The faculty at institutions with the weakest governance structures often take a collegial, drowsy, “make no enemies” approach. These institutions are often characterized by soft organizational structures, typically with weak department or divisional chairs. At many of these institutions, faculty members put into leadership positions arrive in their jobs by default, with their colleagues seeing little value and considerable danger

in moving beyond their teaching and research toward this kind of service. Further, colleges place too little emphasis on such service during tenure and merit-pay determinations.

In shared governance, the ringmaster is the chair of the Board of Trustees. When selecting a new board chair, the board should always seek experienced, competent leaders who are devoid of an agenda. Before they are selected, board chairs should be as carefully vetted as a new president, moving steadily through different board leadership positions as they progress toward the chairmanship.¹⁹ Furthermore, they should have a collegial and effective working professional relationship with the president and key faculty leadership.²⁰

Translating their business case studies, legal interactions, and corporate training too narrowly might be tolerated in a trustee but diminishes the effectiveness of a chair. Prior service in board leadership positions typically weeds out less effective candidates for chair. But in the end, colleges and universities are businesses. They operate by different rules, however, than corporate America—an essential difference that must be understood if shared governance is to work. Like the elected faculty leaders, board chairs must preside and mentor, refusing to play internal board politics or disguising their management style to suit personal preference or a predetermined outcome.

Board chairs mediate, facilitate, and advocate within and outside the campus. If a new board chair cannot support the president, then the board, the president and senior staff, and the faculty must recognize and resolve this issue openly and fairly before a crisis emerges. Failure to do so often does irreparable financial and reputational harm to a college or university—harm that can take years to diminish. Board chairs must be fully transparent when assessing their intentions if elected chair, beginning with a frank and thoughtful examination of how well their management style will fit with the president.

Board chairs govern process but they do not provide the vision shaped by a strategy that moves a college forward. In fact,

the most important role of a board chair is to be a trusted, strategic partner of the president and senior staff. To do so, a chair must respect the lines of authority on a college campus. It is catastrophic for a board, including the chair, to maintain inappropriate professional relationships with staff and faculty that do not run through the president's office. Further, board chairs must understand their role in the partnership, paying special attention to supporting the president as the chief executive officer.²¹ No "change agent" can succeed as a president otherwise, although it is possible to preside as a ceremonial mayor in these settings.

The glue that holds shared governance together is communication. There should be as few secrets as possible, and those that exist must ordinarily be kept to protect personal privacy, state and federal law, and the timing on inquiries, investigations, and announcements. Communication is sometimes confused with transparency. To provide transparency, colleges and universities must have regular lines of communication that are predictable and informative. These include written reports, website postings, and a willingness of the board, faculty, and administrative leadership to communicate regularly and in person to the campus. Transparency is never perfect, but it is critical on a college campus driven by process and healthy skepticism.

Technology also shapes transparency. In a world dominated by social media, every thought—whether original or otherwise—finds a home. Sadly, there are no rules of social etiquette to govern civil behavior. When used properly, social media can be an effective communication tool, linking media venues across generational lines on a college campus. Social media can also be the incubator of good ideas, a convenient way to improve transparency in communication and invaluable when connecting to stakeholders in a crisis. But social media can also inhibit discussion, breed distrust, and raise skepticism about how colleges govern themselves. E-mail, Twitter, and Facebook are unfiltered opportunities for mischief.²² They both advance and inhibit a common campus agenda, depending upon their use.

Boards must use the search process, therefore, to establish the legitimacy of the president, building a case for the president's ability to lead and manage. The president arrives on campus as an outsider. The average tenure of the president at a private college is about seven years,²³ approximately the same time on many campuses as the length of stay of an undergraduate student. For many, there is no reason to invest in what is perceived to be the newest in a string of "visitor" administrators. It is critical for the board and the search committee to craft a climate for a president's success. Boards must determine what direction to give to the search committee. To do so, they must know their campus culture, have a historical sense of what an institution needs, and be prepared to advocate for more if they determine that a college should aspire higher. But they must also be frank with themselves and fully understand the full "all in" institutional costs, financial and otherwise.

Boards can't simply talk a good game. There are any number of considerations that go into selecting a president. One campus may determine that they need someone to preside while another may seek an experienced fund-raiser or someone with national standing. Often campuses seek a change-maker president who can shake up campus cultural inertia, theorizing that you must break a few eggs to make a good omelet. But the danger is that the board—and the campus community itself—may not be willing to pay the price for change. In a process-driven environment, particularly at colleges and universities that are more selective and therefore less entrepreneurially driven to find students through differentiated programs, there can be the sense of too much change, which challenges the conservative environment on campus. The failure to match institutional ambition to financial resources and management support is a recipe for disaster.

As former Cornell University president Frank H. T. Rhodes has argued, this failure most often occurs when the board does not understand that its role is to "keep noses in and fingers out."²⁴

This is especially problematic for boards that have historically wielded too much power and installed presidents who did not have the authority to govern fully by managing effectively. It is an insult to the collective ego of such boards to have a strong president in place, even when that's whom they directed their search committee to hire. This situation further inhibits the relationship between the president and the senior staff. It is impossible to build staff loyalties that are often directed to special relationships that the senior staff developed with trustees long before the president arrived. If the board also interferes with the ability of the president to make staff changes, the president's authority to produce change supported by good strategy is greatly diminished.

The impact that relationships within shared governance have on a college or university can also profoundly affect how leadership manages the shop. Boards have a critical role to play in management, beginning with an assessment of the president. Gone are the days when boards could equivocate through the end of a multiyear contract simply to avoid conflict. Yet the assessment of the president must be fair, balanced, and measured against the charge given to the president by the board, and against the strategic planning that shapes the president's actions. If the review dominates the agenda, presidents fearful for their tenure will perform to the standards expected if they seek a renewed contract. The effect sublimates the president to the review, especially if the standards are unclear, the search firm is inexperienced in higher education, or the goals are not explicit.²⁵ At the same time, presidents must encourage a helpful annual review of themselves once fair standards have been set.

In the same way, presidents must be thorough in their ongoing assessment and scrupulous in their management of senior staff, individually and as a group. It is critical for the president to form the team and imperative that the board empower the president to put together and make adjustments to the senior team. How this core team functions will determine how well a

college functions, the seamlessness with which administrative decisions are conveyed, and the success in implementing strategy. If changes need to be made, the president must be prepared to make them thoughtfully but expediently. In doing so, the president must have clear standards broadly communicated against which metrics demonstrating success are created and enforced.

The same standards apply to the board's role in governance. Trustees must conduct both a self and a board evaluation to establish a comprehensive assessment of board performance. These evaluations must be conducted annually, with at least one board meeting largely devoted to board performance. As part of its assessment, the board must also consider how effective the chair, board officers, and faculty representatives are in their roles, developing recommendations for improvement. These periodic examinations must also determine the strategic value of each standing committee, with a charge to modify, eliminate, or replace as necessary. Building a stronger board must rely heavily on "best practice" solutions developed at like institutions, assuming that the board finds adopted best practices consistent with campus traditions and culture.²⁶

It is important to recognize that transparency by itself is not enough to assure effective governance of a college or university. Furthermore, most "dashboards"—like older measures such as audits—are too simplistic if the college is working to professionalize management to improve governance. Educating the campus on the functioning of the enterprise, so that campus stakeholders develop the knowledge to fully understand and act upon shared information, must be an operating principle. Tools such as the budget simulation and projection program developed by Grinnell College and publicly available to its stakeholders are extremely beneficial.²⁷

How a college views its strategic plan will determine in large part how effectively and creatively it is managed. Strategic plans must move from aspirational laundry lists, designed to appease

all major constituencies, to a truly strategic map guiding a college in the right direction. What are the two or three goals that will make a material difference to the mission and future of the institution? Is the strategic plan linked to the campus facilities master plan, the external relations agenda, enrollment and financial aid model, and advancement agenda, including tactical capital campaign objectives? If the college or university is complex enough, are there corresponding strategic plans linked to the central plan driving decisions by deans and department chairs at the colleges, schools, departments, institutes, and centers also managed by the overarching strategic plan?

In developing a strategic plan, management must also carefully distinguish between strategic and tactical plans. Tactical plans solve problems “in the moment”—persistent, serious operational issues like structural deficits and declining enrollments. There are some problems, however, that require immediate attention. Finding a solution will provide a solid foundation upon which a strategic plan can be built. These issues are too critical to delay until a comprehensive planning process plays out. If the most troubling issues requiring tactical plans are resolved, the institution then enjoys the breathing space necessary to develop a comprehensive, informed strategic plan broadly communicated to, and with critical input from, the campus community.

In the end, governance is both an art and a science. It is a balancing act among skeptical partners with competing interests and different contributing roles. Good governance presumes a commitment to know more about what you do not know, even when you don’t know that you don’t know it. Governance requires the sublimation of individual and collective egos, with clear rules to put aside distracting questions about who has “too much power.” Without effective governance, strategic plans fail because leadership among the trustees, administration, and faculty lack the confidence to imagine the possible. It’s so much easier to protect the present.

Management is the glue that links governance to strategy. Management requires a clear line of authority with rules that engage and bind. It is the one area of campus life where college and corporate life intersect, because imagining the possible depends upon good business practice. Most colleges and universities have sketchy and episodic management reviews, operate as businesses in an insular “Mom and Pop” fashion, and are sufficiently decentralized to inhibit the implementation of even the best strategic plans. For a college or university to advance, its leaders and their approach to college oversight must be professionalized. It’s the best way to protect what’s in place.

Governance, girded by best-management practices, has markers to determine how best to strengthen a college or university’s standing. We begin with the obvious choice: Follow the money.

Finance

Colleges and universities have traditionally relied upon three primary sources of support for their operating budgets. The first and most obvious is revenue derived from tuition, room, board, and fees. This will be explored in detail in the next chapter. The second is revenue derived from fund-raising, typically in the form of annual appeals and multiyear capital campaigns. The third is revenue derived from the investment performance of the endowment. This chapter will examine how market changes have negatively impacted all three of these revenue sources, leading to tightened budgets and difficult choices. Ultimately, relying solely on these sources of revenue puts institutions in jeopardy. Other options for liquidity and investments in innovation must be sought to keep the institution nimble and able to fulfill its mission.

Institutional endowments are probably some of the most misunderstood financial instruments. The first and most profound misunderstanding is the magnitude of operating support that they provide. In 2016, the annual study of endowments by the National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) and the Commonfund Institute collected information

on 805 colleges and universities. The total endowment of these institutions was \$515 billion. However, “91 educational institutions with assets over \$1 billion accounted for \$382.5 billion, or about 74 percent of participants’ combined endowment assets.”¹ Almost half (375 institutions) had endowments of \$100 million or less. Even at the high end of this group, the annual operating budget support from the endowment would amount to less than \$5 million, much less in many cases.² While important to understand, the average endowment is often quite limited in its support of the institution.

A college or university’s endowment is actually an agglomeration of many different funds, given by donors over the years to provide perpetual support for faculty, students, programs, and so on. These restricted funds must be spent according to the donor’s wishes, and the trustees of the institution function as fiduciaries in their investment and expenditure. The funds, as a whole, are invested in a variety of financial markets and instruments, so as to maximize the return while not incurring inordinate risk. Nevertheless, the average return will vary based on market performance as a whole. In the past ten years, the volatility has been substantial, ranging from –18.7 percent in 2009 to 19.2 percent in 2011, to –1.9 in 2016 (fig. 2.1).³ In order to ameliorate this volatility, the value of the endowment is often calculated on the basis of a rolling quarterly average. This average is generally calculated on data from twelve to twenty quarters. Based on market performance, the governing board sets a spending rate, usually 5 percent or below, so as to increase the corpus at a rate equal to or higher than inflation (assuming 7.4 percent median annual earnings) while providing operating funds for the intended purpose. It is not unusual for institutions to also maintain a “savings account” of sorts, often referred to as a quasi-endowment, funds that function as endowment, or reserve funds. These are typically valued and spent using the same method as the rest of the endowment, but they are not restricted by donor covenants, so they can be used to support general operations.

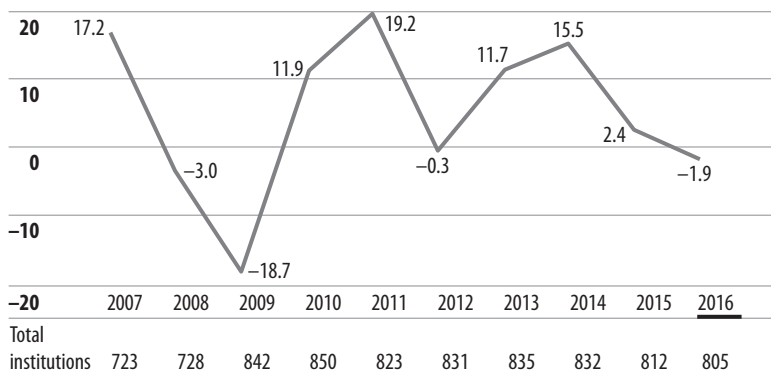


Figure 2.1. Average Annual Net Worth Returns for Total Institutions for Fiscal Years 2007–2016 (in percentages). From National Association of College and University Business Officers and Commonfund Institute, 2016 NACUBO-Commonfund Study of Endowments (Washington, DC: NACUBO and Commonfund Institute, 2017), 9.

Gifts to the annual fund and capital campaign may be quite varied. In general, institutions seek gifts for the annual fund that are not restricted and can be used to support the operating budget. However, capital campaign gifts are almost always restricted to a certain purpose, either immediate capital projects or to establish new, perpetual funds within the endowment. For the purpose of operating the college from year to year, the annual fund is critical. Unfortunately, annual giving has been on a long, slow retreat. In 2014, Dan Allenby noted, “The world of advancement is facing a crisis—in numbers. In 1990, 18 percent of college and university alumni gave to their alma mater, according to the Council for Aid to Education. By 2013, that number had been cut in half to less than 9 percent—a record low and a culmination of a trend that has persisted for more than two decades.”⁴ There are myriad speculations as to why this has occurred, ranging from the changing alumni experience to alumni bearing much greater debt.⁵ No matter the reason, the effect has been profound.

In a refreshingly frank Wesleyan University alumni magazine article, Michael Santoli wrote,

This failure to keep pace with top-10 liberal arts schools in the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings, though, was not simply a matter of investment results, which admittedly have lagged those achieved by many of Wesleyan's peers. For years, Wesleyan spent too much from its endowment, used too high a percentage of donated funds for operations rather than adding them to the endowment, and until the past two decades, suffered from considerably lower alumni giving levels than its peers. Together, these factors—compounded over time—had a huge impact.⁶

With endowment and fund-raising essentially “tapped out,” institutions large and small have turned to tuition, fees, room, and board as their primary source of revenue. According to the College Board, the average cost of tuition, fees, room, and board at a four-year private college, in constant 2015 dollars, has risen from \$30,716 in 2001 to \$43,921 in 2016. Public four-year universities have seen a similar trend, also in constant 2015 dollars, from \$11,655 in 2001 to \$19,584 in 2016.⁷ However, these gross figures do not give a true picture since discounts, rising to more than 45 percent on tuition and fees for incoming freshman at private colleges, substantially affect the net revenue from tuition, fees, room, and board.⁸ In constant 2015 dollars, that net figure for private institutions has risen from \$21,210 in 2001 to \$26,400 in 2016. For public institutions, it has risen from \$8,510 in 2001 to \$14,120 in 2016 (in constant 2015 dollars).⁹ These are significant increases, but nothing like the increases in “sticker price.” Nevertheless, the stated price is a factor in driving students toward public two-year colleges, where the net cost (in constant 2015 dollars) has dropped from 2001 to 2016.¹⁰ Ultimately, the ability to pay has been a substantial factor in ameliorating the costs to families. However, this is bad news for the institutions because it illustrates in real terms that revenue from the primary educational mission is also “tapped out.”

This is the reality, the so-called new normal that makes college finances the most challenging part of shared governance. With revenue growth so constrained, the operating budget becomes an annual exercise in cost control. Before getting into this exercise, the difference between the operating budget and the capital budget should be examined and understood. The operating budget covers the day-to-day expenses of the college. These include salaries, supplies, utilities, etc. The capital budget covers the purchase or construction of assets—land, buildings, and equipment. As previously discussed, these capital expenditures have traditionally been funded by gifts and grants (usually during a capital campaign). These expenditures may also be funded by incurring debt. In 2016, the National Association of College and University Business Officers and the Commonfund Institute endowment study collected debt information on 594 colleges and universities. The median long-term debt of these institutions was \$61.5 million.¹¹ Unlike a gift or grant, debt must be repaid. When debt is used, capital expenditures begin to impact the operating budget. In 2016, the average debt service for the 594 institutions was 5.6 percent of the operating budget.¹² Debt service cannot easily be adjusted from year to year. For this reason, the rule of thumb has generally been to deploy debt on capital expenditures that generate positive cash flow, such as residence halls, so that revenue can be used to service the debt. In practice, some institutions have utilized debt as another source of funds to deal with operating deficits. This is especially corrosive behavior because it simply postpones the “day of reckoning” to later years (and often later administrations).

Balancing the operating budget has become one of the most contentious annual debates on campus. In many cases, the problem is deeper than any given year’s expenses versus revenue. A substantial number of colleges and universities have structural deficits. Unlike cyclical deficits, which are caused by changes in revenue due to the economic cycle (the Great Recession being a good example), structural deficits are permanent, ameliorated

but not eliminated by upturns and exacerbated by downturns. These may only be eliminated by changes in the structure of the institution that permanently reduce expenses. Data on structural deficits in higher education are difficult to collect because, unlike teaching awards and climbing walls, colleges and universities are hesitant to release information on their underlying structural problems. Nevertheless, it is these structural difficulties that over time can result in cataclysms, like the closure of Sweet Briar College in 2015.¹³ While Sweet Briar was subsequently reopened with a heroic fund-raising effort by its alumnae, its staggering \$20 million structural deficit will be its single greatest challenge moving forward.¹⁴

Deficits, structural or cyclical, have led to seemingly inexorable skirmishes over the budget. However, this need not be the natural state of affairs. If this book had been written twenty years ago, this chapter would have been a discussion of strategic finance. That will be our focus going forward, but ever mindful of the current and likely future realities in higher education. In shared governance, the most important aspect of strategic finance is *transparency*. This is a term so bandied about that it has become a hackneyed punch line to many a joke about college administrations and boards. In fact, it is not that difficult to be transparent. With the exception of confidential personnel and student data, the financial workings of the college and university can be disclosed with a high degree of specificity. One of the best practices an institution might consider is to embed these data into a dynamic model, which might be as simple as a spreadsheet. This model allows the user to “follow the money” in the literal sense. She or he can examine how the institution makes and spends money but also how changing these variables can rather dramatically impact the health of the institution.

Armed with the right data, the shared governors of the college or university are well equipped to do the deep thinking required to be financially strategic but also institutionally strategic. Strategic planning, especially in good economic times,

has often led to “laundry list” plans of aspirational goals that are not especially strategic. Worse, many plans included “big hairy audacious goals” (so-called BHAGs), inspired by the corporate work of Jim Collins and Jerry Porras, which might have been strategic but were not especially achievable.¹⁵ A strategic plan, at its core, should be strategic-minded and achievable. There is no shame in making that achievement a stretch, but it should be an honest stretch. The mission and the strategic plan are the two most useful instruments in shared governance because they can be used to efficiently guide decision-making. That is why it is so critical for institutions to regularly examine and agree upon both.

Beginning the endeavor of strategic planning includes, more often than not, a great deal of conversation about innovation and entrepreneurship. In many cases, this conversation is not well informed. For example, being more entrepreneurial is often equated with taking more risks. That is a fundamental misconception of entrepreneurship. As Malcolm Gladwell points out, “The risk-taking model suggests that the entrepreneur’s chief advantage is one of temperament—he’s braver than the rest of us are. In the predator model, the entrepreneur’s advantage is analytical—he’s better at figuring out a sure thing than the rest of us.”¹⁶ Transparency, as previously discussed, can make the constituents more analytical. This is an especially welcome benefit when it comes to strategic planning. Ultimately, the goal is to develop a plan that gives the college or university a strategic advantage. It is that advantage that will be critical to the success of the enterprise.

The other common misconception is about the nature of innovation, which is often infused with romantic visions of charismatic inventors personally championing new ideas. At its essence, innovation is the process of introducing new strategies or processes into existing systems. While this definition may sound mundane, it is critical: it means that there does not have to be a singular visionary. The shared governors, as a whole,

can drive innovation. It also means that they can draw upon the best practices from other industries. The transformation of Samsung is a useful analogy. According to Tarun Khana et al., “Twenty years ago, few people would have predicted that Samsung could transform itself from a low-cost original equipment manufacturer to a world leader in R&D, marketing, and design, with a brand more valuable than Pepsi, Nike, or American Express.”¹⁷ It did so by incorporating Western best practices with the traditional Japanese management system that it already employed. This hybrid model allowed it to focus on innovation and strategy while maintaining high standards, long-term relationships, and employee retention and development. It increased the receptivity for new ideas by bringing in outsiders, many from other industries, and sending insiders out into the world to see how things were done elsewhere. Ultimately, this created an environment in which, “to move to the next level, they, too, must reinvent themselves in ways that may seem contradictory. And when they reach new plateaus, they will need to do so again.”¹⁸

With the mission well understood, a strategic plan developed, and a system for innovation in place, the college or university is in a good position to begin tackling the complicated financial issues and opportunities with which it is faced. Harkening back to our previous discussion of deficits and balancing the books, the budgeting exercise is fundamentally different. When difficult decisions have to be made, they can be driven by mission and strategy. It changes from a mine/yours debate (often held in secret) about scarcity into an innovative process of shared governance about what is best for the institution. Alternately, when there are surpluses or gifts to be invested, the same process can drive those decisions. Fairness is often at the heart of the most contentious debates in academe. The issue is about both fair actions and fair outcomes. Having agreed upon plans and processes in place greatly increases the likelihood of both. It allows the college to focus on its mission without being constantly

sidetracked by squabbling and infighting. It also allows all of the actors in shared governance to thoughtfully do what is best for the institution and the constituents it serves, especially its current and future students.

One of the interesting facets of Samsung's renaissance is its focus on other companies, both inside and outside of its industry. While colleges and universities generally avoid any such comparisons, there are certainly analogs in other industries that can be valuable for garnering both ideas and practices. At the height of the Great Recession, Steve Bartolin, president of the Broadmoor resort in Colorado, wrote a letter to the mayor and city council of Colorado Springs.¹⁹ He offered up suggestions, based on his experience at the resort, about managing the city. While this is by no means a perfect analogy, he argued, "When the economic climate becomes difficult, some organizations do better than others. By tapping the entrepreneurial survival instincts of those who run these organizations, my thought is we can help our city managers versus hurling criticism from the sidelines." Residential colleges and universities resemble other industries in many respects. Food service is often outsourced primarily because the hospitality industry understands it better and does it better. However, residential operations, facilities, and grounds are all similar to the hospitality industry and offer up useful operational analogs. It is not just the ancillary operations. The relationship between faculty and students is, in many ways, quite like that between physicians and patients: a trained professional is using his or her expert opinion to provide the best course of action. This one-on-one relationship is expensive in both industries.²⁰ These analogies may not be perfect, but at a minimum, they can provide useful ways to reexamine our assumptions about higher education.

Any discussion of strategic finance in the current environment must acknowledge that revenue from endowment, advancement, and enrollment are essentially flat—"tapped out"—at most institutions. While almost everyone would like to grow revenue

from each, this seems unlikely since most, if not all, of the competition is trying to do the same thing. Even with the most brilliant strategies, adequate funding is required to implement them. This becomes difficult to come by in an environment in which simply balancing the budget is a challenge. Nevertheless, there are two avenues of opportunity. Most colleges and universities carry substantial debt and have one significantly underutilized asset: real estate. As discussed previously, the structure of the debt can have significant implications on both the operating budget and the balance sheet. These restrict spending on new initiatives and they determine the nature, structure, and availability of additional debt.

While 84.0 percent of institutions in the 2016 NACUBO-Commonfund Study of Endowments have fixed interest rates at a favorable rate of 4.0 percent, there are refinancing options that can yield very favorable results.²¹ In recent years, rural colleges and university have turned to the US Department of Agriculture to finance and refinance their debt. The USDA's rural finance program traces its lineage to the New Deal. It is especially useful since so many institutions are located in remote areas that qualify for the programs. These programs provide financing, both loans and grants, for colleges to build new infrastructure and, through financial mechanisms like sale-leaseback, refinance existing infrastructure. The below-market rates and long-term loans (e.g., forty years, fixed, at 2.75 percent, in 2016) can provide immediate relief to the operating budget, in the case of refinancing, or funding for new strategic construction. Beyond the favorable terms, they do not carry the same strict ratios and covenants, strictures that have become ever more difficult for colleges to manage.

Ferrum College has successfully deployed USDA financing to go "from frumpy to fabulous in five years."²² Similarly, Ferrum utilized a grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services to renovate and expand their fitness center, turning it into a 20,000-square-foot YMCA.²³ Emory & Henry College

refinanced all of its debt and built a new \$12 million residential village for a total of \$51 million while still substantially lowering its annual debt service.²⁴ This was critical in eliminating a structural deficit that had existed for more than a decade. In 2010, Washington and Lee University, in partnership with the City of Lexington and Rockbridge County, received a \$6.9 million grant from the USDA Rural Utilities Service to build a new data center on campus, which, in turn, provided broadband access to fifty community institutions. “About 36 percent of all people in the United States do not have access to big broadband and, over time, providing this access in Rockbridge County will open up great opportunities for living and working across the county,” noted Rick Peterson, W&L’s chief technology officer.²⁵

Alternately, colleges and universities in urban areas often have real estate assets, both unutilized and underutilized, that could be significant sources of new capital or revenue. Stanford University developed and subsequently leased out land for Stanford Shopping Center, one of the most upscale retail venues in Silicon Valley. In addition, it also leases out substantial land for corporate R&D facilities in Stanford Research Park. Both of these projects date from the 1950s, but they are still significant sources of revenue today (and Stanford still owns all the land they occupy).²⁶ Drexel University recently announced the development of Schuylkill Yards, a twenty-year project to develop fourteen acres of university land adjacent to Philadelphia’s 30th Street Station. The developer will provide all financing for the project, and Drexel will collect millions per year on long-term ground leases.²⁷ Franklin & Marshall College recently completed a mixed-use residential and retail development adjacent to its campus that provides apartment housing for nearly four hundred students. The development was done via a sixty-year ground lease, providing revenue for the college and very popular housing without affecting the college’s balance sheet or debt capacity.²⁸

These are just a few examples of methods that colleges and universities are using to monetize assets and increase financial

resources in a time when other revenue sources have flat-lined. They provide the institution with the flexibility to try new strategies without having to be absolutely certain they will succeed. This is the overriding goal of strategic finance: to provide the institution with the resources it requires to be innovative and entrepreneurial. Of course, many institutions have utilized “right-sizing” (code for staff reductions) and “program prioritization” (code for program elimination) to increase budgetary flexibility. While those measures may have their place, especially in dealing with structural deficits, they are a strategy of diminishing returns because at some point they affect the core teaching and learning enterprise. A progressive, generative approach that depends on new ideas to face challenges is not only more satisfying but is also more sustainable.

Sustainability has become an ever more important goal on college campuses. Certainly, environmental sustainability is a major part of that discussion, and it is one that higher education should be having. However, it often masks a much greater financial problem—deferred maintenance. So often, especially in tight financial times, maintenance is the first budget item to be cut. This creates an enormous amount of backlog over time, which is generally not reflected (or not accurately reflected) in the depreciation on the balance sheet. NACUBO and the Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers estimate that US colleges and universities have more than “\$26 billion in accumulated deferred maintenance, of which \$5.7 billion constituted urgent needs.”²⁹ When one thinks of deferred maintenance, leaky roofs and antiquated steam plants often come to mind. While these are substantial issues, they distract from a more holistic view of the problem, which includes aging computer networks, outdated residential configurations (no singles, no private bathrooms), and outmoded classroom configurations.

If an institution is being honest about its true financial position, this deferred maintenance must be accounted for and a reasonable plan for addressing it developed. In many ways, this

plan can be as important as the institution's strategic plan; in fact, it can be just as strategic. This is also an area where the financial impact can be lessened through creative approaches. Since many colleges have historic buildings that figure substantially into their infrastructure, they should always keep tax credits in mind. A complimentary approach is partnering with developers who can further leverage these tax credits. This is an opportune moment to consider whether the institution should own and operate the facility itself. As discussed early, long-term leases, either on ground or buildings, can be a useful option, effectively making the maintenance someone else's problem for a long time to come. While some worry that this can affect the campus feel and student experience, those both can be moderated by specific covenants within the lease or other contracts. The key is to approach the assessment of such opportunities with a fresh perspective, which questions the "way we have always done it." Tradition has a place within the academy, but not in assessing strategic financial decisions.

The last chapter concluded with a challenge—Follow the money—to strengthen a college or university's standing. The revenues and expenses, especially at the macro level, are simple to understand. With some diligence, everyone within the shared governance structure can be well versed in the budget dynamics and prepared to engage in thoughtful discussions that strengthen the institution. This is absolutely essential, given the challenges that lie ahead for higher education. The twenty-first century will be a balancing act for most colleges and universities. Families will be ever more challenged to finance college. This will remain especially true for first-generation families. Nevertheless, these challenges have to be answered with full-throated responses because for most colleges and universities, enrollment is the key; it is, by far, the biggest revenue driver. While the practices described in this chapter can strengthen the finances of the institution, nothing does more than successful enrollment management.

Enrollment

Enrollment is code for revenue.¹ It describes the full range of admission and financial aid activities that define and shape a college's ability to put students in their seats. Most importantly, enrollment is the principal revenue source for colleges and universities, whether public or private. A college's success—or failure—to bring in a class has more impact on where an institution heads than any other factor.

Historically, a college's sources of operating revenue are fairly limited. In general, tuition represents about 68 percent of the budget of students living on campus at private colleges and 39 percent of an instate student's budget at public colleges and universities.² The growing reliance upon tuition is a significant issue at most public colleges and universities.³ This is an important fact because most American colleges and universities are heavily tuition-dependent institutions and not endowment-rich accumulators of wealth. The idea that Harvard, Princeton, Stanford, or Yale represents the reality of most higher education institutions is absurd and dangerous, especially if lawmakers shape state and federal policy on issues like endowment-spending practices and their tax-exempt status on misperceived

notions of wealth spread more uniformly across American higher education.

The importance of tuition is particularly noteworthy because the other sources of operating support are limited. Auxiliary revenues—including functions such as dining, residence halls, the bookstore, printing, concessions, computer sales and services, and parking, among others—are essentially flat or growing only slightly.⁴ At many smaller colleges and universities, auxiliary services have two ways to impact a college's bottom line. The first is to support the academic program that often runs a deficit; many of these programs fail to produce enough tuition revenue to cover the expense of offering them. The second is to offset key capital costs, such as the debt on new residential and student service-oriented construction, which can be paid off through increased room or student fee charges.

As we discussed earlier, fund-raising is an expense that has a significantly smaller impact on most colleges and universities than most people imagine. It takes time to raise money, and there are administrative costs associated with this effort. While the revenue may shore up needs such as scholarship aid, faculty support, or capital expansion, it typically supports a longer-term goal, unless raised as operating revenue through an annual fund solicitation. Absent other significant sources of revenue, the tuition taken in by a college drives the decision-making on campus. Admission officers effectively serve as frontline fund-raisers for their colleges and universities.

American higher education is big business. In the fall of 2016, America's colleges and universities expected to enroll more than 20.5 million students.⁵ This number has increased just shy of 34 percent since 2000, despite unfavorable demographic trends.⁶ The characteristics of the college-going population are especially interesting. For example, since 1979, college-going women have represented over 50 percent of the college-going population, although the number has hovered around 57 percent since the early 2000s.⁷ While men represent a lower percentage of college

students, the number continues to grow, from approximately 6.7 million in 2000 to 8.8 million in 2016.⁸ Among minorities, Hispanic enrollment tripled from 1996 to 2012, while black enrollment increased by 72 percent in the same time period. However, in 2012 young adult Hispanics accounted for only 9 percent of bachelor degrees awarded in that demographic.⁹

The story gets even more interesting when enrollment is compared to the type of institution. Forty-six percent of 2013–14 graduates from four-year institutions had been enrolled in a community college at some point, up slightly from 2010.¹⁰ There are a number of possible explanations for the significant increase in attendance at community colleges. For some students, a community college can be a “first stop” college experience, with 81 percent of first-time community college students indicating that they plan to seek a four-year degree.¹¹ For others, attendance can also be a market-driven decision, with these students saving on four-year college costs because of their perception of the posted sticker prices of a four-year degree, without regard to the financial aid discounts that are factored into the final equation. But whatever the reason, the effect is to shrink the pool of qualified first-time enrollees at four-year public and private colleges and universities.

One of the biggest misperceptions about American higher education is that it is a “one size fits all” opportunity across America. In fact, higher education opportunities vary dramatically by state and region. Generally, most private four-year colleges are located east of the Mississippi River, although there are sizable pockets of private institutions along the Pacific Coast. The largest “private” higher education states are New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Ohio, Illinois, and California. A second substantial group of private institutions exists in Florida, Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, Indiana, Michigan, and Georgia, among others.¹² In these states, the private colleges maintain a high profile in state and federal policy deliberations and have an important impact on the higher education landscape. Many education, political, and

media leaders consider Massachusetts, for example, to be a “private higher education state.”¹³

The two characteristics that define American higher education by location and type are complexity and decentralization. In Pennsylvania, for instance, a number of historic factors have produced a system of state-owned, state related (Penn State, Temple, Pitt, and Lincoln) private, and community colleges.¹⁴ Other states have similar variations, with the size and scale dependent on history, regional demographics, workforce needs, and long-term political clout. Overlaid onto this nonprofit mix of public and private options is the for-profit community, MOOC’s, and online programming, which impacts consumer perceptions, attendance levels, delivery mechanisms, and outcomes.¹⁵

The needs of the American workforce highlight the importance of a robust higher education system. Tony Carnevale, director of Georgetown’s Center on Education and the Workforce, estimates that America will need more than 20 million additional college graduates by 2025.¹⁶ But the reality and practicality differ. There is a cognitive dissonance between what America needs and what its future workforce will be trained to do. This fact is further clouded by the failure to achieve comprehensive immigration reform to set clearer parameters for supplementing the college-trained, native-born American workforce. The effect is to add a layer of uncertainty into how schools, especially those seeking more tuition income from international students, build out their admissions pool.¹⁷

Further, the American higher education market is decentralized and segmented by the current political climate and practices. How do public colleges—many of which face capped tuition and fee increases by governors and state legislatures—continue to provide access and choice to students? If most community colleges depend on a substantial level of local funding, some variation of state subsidies, and tuition fees for their support, does this mix really prepare them for the explosive growth possible with shifting demographics and national political priorities? Is

the only recourse for public colleges and universities to move when they can to “state-located” status, effectively privatizing their operations?¹⁸

Is the market for private colleges and universities any more stable than their public counterparts? In a recent survey of 389 higher education admission officers, only 37 percent met their May 1, 2016, admission targets, slightly worse than the year before.¹⁹ Indeed, more than three hundred colleges had openings still available.²⁰ This market softness is met by a corresponding rise in the tuition discount rate, now at almost 50 percent at private colleges nationally (fig. 3.1).²¹ At the weakest institutions, this number is substantially higher. Smaller rural institutions and those with small or no endowments are increasingly unprepared to respond to how to increase the net tuition revenue, which leaves such institutions with few other options if they wish to remain open.

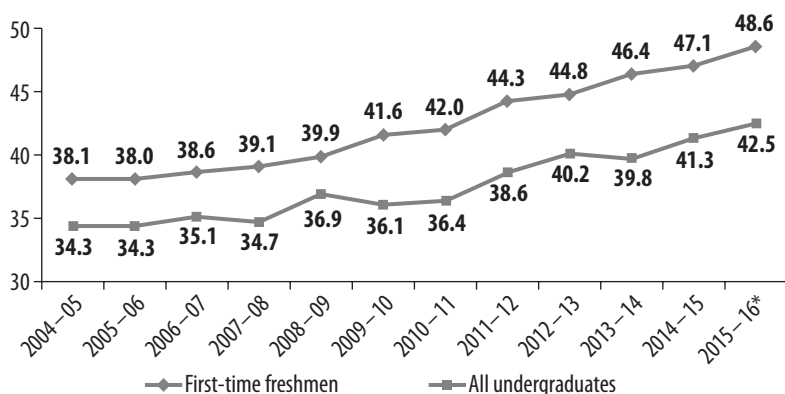


Figure 3.1. Average Institutional Tuition Discount Rate, by Student Category (in percentages). From the National Association of College and University Business Officers, *2015 NACUBO Tuition Discounting Study* (Washington, DC: NACUBO, May 2016), 4. Data as of the fall of each academic year.

* = preliminary estimate.

The failure to produce enough tuition revenue to meet expenses is a quiet but rapidly escalating crisis in American higher education. In a sense, it doesn't matter much whether the institution is public or private since the effect is the same. Indeed, the efforts to "privatize" public higher education may well saddle public colleges and universities with their version of systemic private college problems. But what is clear is that American higher education has lost control of the debate over what students should pay. Consumers are in open revolt, drawing very little distinction between sticker price, financial aid and tuition discounting, and the actual cost of attendance. Consumer preferences have also shifted as a college education is increasingly seen to be a middle-class entitlement. The cumulative effect is to fuel a consumer revolt against the high price—confused as cost—of a higher education.²²

This makes it impossible for colleges and universities to raise tuition prices at the previous levels of annual increase. At public colleges and universities, the sticker price has increased by more than 116 percent over the past twenty years. On the private side, the increase is more than 69 percent over the same period.²³ It's a kind of perfect mess. There is a pressing need for more college-educated workers, with a college degree now often becoming the entry-level requirement to the workplace in many fields.²⁴ Colleges and universities have reached the end of their capacity to raise tuition and fees, with state and local governments beginning investigations—often fueled by consumer polling—on college costs. To respond to the market, most colleges have increased their financial aid discounting, with the costs being borne by full-pay students, who are increasingly difficult to find and who also expect some merit reward as part of their attendance package.

In the twentieth century, higher education was scaled differently, not yet subject to expanding options from nonprofit and for-profit providers. It was bound to tradition in the age of the four-color glossy brochure. Today, there is no real difference in the socioeconomic status of applicants who apply to most

four-year public or private colleges. These families perceive their selection of a college as an economic transaction, in fact, in which they can negotiate their deal. It's no longer a choice set and financed by families working through the numbers around the kitchen table. As the barriers to admission have imploded over the past forty years, where an applicant goes, if the price is right, is less bound by social convention and better protected by law. Choice is about the economics of the deal.

This is less true for first-generation, low-income students. Many of these students are place bound. In addition, their cultural, social, and psychological barriers are such that together they frame the range of an applicant's expectations.²⁵ It makes local public higher education an attractive option, often because these students lack the counseling and safety net to support a world beyond the practical and immediate. This is especially true for non-traditional-age students. For many of these students, community colleges provide an attractive option. Additionally, the failure of most four-year higher education institutions to construct a robust pathway to admit two-year graduates further confuses the state of the higher education market.

At four-year institutions, a large part of the problem rests with how to build their incoming admission classes. For the traditional first-time applicants and their families, the applicant pool seems like a collection of interested high school seniors made up of young adults who bear little relationship to one another. In fact, each incoming class has discrete building blocks balanced against admission goals that are linked strategically to a larger college enrollment plan. An admission class represents where a college is on the higher education map as defined by its location, reputation, and outreach. It is also a statement of what an institution thinks is important. It's a "put your money where your mouth is" moment in which the class reflects the values that an institution holds dear.

The first building block is the academic program. At any institution, academic programs—usually led by a few well-focused

and well-marketed disciplines—attract applicants. Sometimes interest can also be tied to a religious affiliation or to student practices like the work and study approach used at Berea College in Kentucky.²⁶ It's hardly surprising that applicants interested in engineering or a professional degree like nursing should look to schools that specialize in these fields. And of course, athletics or strong athletic programs can also shape a decision to apply because many applicants chose a college based upon their ability to play sports there.

But at many colleges—especially liberal arts institutions—program specialization is often less important to the applicant than the educational approach adopted by a college. These colleges specialize in educating students liberally—producing an educated citizenry and workforce that can write, articulate, apply quantitative methods, use technology, and work in a collaborative setting. Within these institutions, there are endless debates about the balance between humanities and social sciences and professional degree programs like management and engineering. The best of these institutions focus on how to foster an environment dedicated to creative inquiry, which combines creativity and innovation to support student research, independent scholarship, and civic engagement. Their argument is that this balance between creativity and innovation best prepares their students for the future, personally and professionally.²⁷

Colleges and universities rely upon a number of additional building blocks to put together each admissions class. The use of student athletes is critical, especially at smaller institutions. These schools, overwhelmingly grouped as Division III by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), balance their classes by gender and increase minority representation on college campuses by attracting minorities who are student athletes. In a college of 1,200 students that maintains a football roster of 120 players, the impact on gender and race can be substantial, particularly if these smaller institutions hope to meet established enrollment targets. Student athletes are often the rock stars of

the campus and an invaluable way to connect alumni, parents, donors, and the community with emotional, social, and psychological ties to a college. Athletics cuts across generational lines of enthusiasm and support.

A few colleges have begun experimenting with the use of an “affinity yield” model, pioneered at Allegheny College and expanded to a series of private colleges in the Northeast, Midwest, and Southeast. In this model, athletic directors and coaches assume much larger responsibilities to focus how, where, and why they recruit, with an eye to specific enrollment and revenue targets. Admissions recruiters work with the athletics, financial aid, and the finance office to set goals and targets to establish a specific discount, an expected number of full-pay students, and the total number of recruits into a series of measurable goals. The model effectively turns the coach into an admissions recruiter who understands that students represent revenue rather than expense in the college’s annual operating budget. They also work diligently to cap general athletic discount rates to increase net tuition revenue. This same affinity model may also be applied to other groups, for example, a marching band, to build a more focused campus-wide admissions recruiting plan.²⁸

At many schools, legacies can also play an important role, especially if the institution’s reputation has remained stable or grown since the previous generations in a family attended it. Legacies are important because they link support generationally to tie in alumni, career development, and fund-raising goals important to an institution. The danger, of course, is that legacy status—especially among well-heeled alumni—can be both a blessing and a curse. Talent and intelligence may not be distributed evenly across generations. Occasionally, it places college administrators in the unenviable position of deciding whether to make space for a fictional student like the one that an admissions colleague called Cameron Payne. “Campaign,” whose wealthy family are already heavy contributors to the college and have substantial future giving capacity, might take a seat, if

admitted, that would otherwise be reserved for a more qualified student with fewer resources.²⁹

The next admissions category is the “special status” group of students. These students may be part of a minority or low-income first generation recruitment plan like the admirable programs of the Posse Foundation.³⁰ They may also be participants in a merit scholarship program, designed to attract students to particular academic programs that a college emphasizes for strategic reasons. Or they may be students who fill particular scholarship program conditions made possible by generous donors. Enrollment officials often use these programs to round out their incoming classes. They make certain that the student body matches the program offerings, residential life programs, and general admission recruitment goals. It is this category from which most urban legend stories arise about the student accepted from Montana or Alaska or the talented oboe player offered the seat in the college symphony or marching band.

There are “over the transom” students who apply without much effort at their recruitment. They do not fall into special categories and are not legacies, but they are integral to filling out the class. There is a wide range of ability in this category of student. Many of them are among the most interesting and talented additions to the admissions pool. What is most surprising about this group is that so few of them are needed to complete the incoming class. At some colleges with strong athletic and affinity programs, perhaps as little as a third of the admission class is not part of a special category. Since special category students are often recruited more heavily and benefit potentially from higher levels of institutional aid—depending upon enrollment policy and NCAA rules—these “over the transom” students usually face tougher admissions standards than active recruits in other categories.

To complete the class, most colleges and universities rely on transfer students, who are perhaps the most promising admissions building block for continued, sustainable growth. But

adding transfers into the admissions class often faces cultural inertia at most institutions, whose faculty and staff educate for an 18-to-24-year-old cohort. In a study of 414 private colleges and universities released by the Edvance Foundation in November 2015, researchers found that most private colleges are responsive to transfers from two-year colleges, and most use transfer students to fill in the gaps in their annual admission targets. The most selective institutions are less likely to do so. In addition, most colleges “poach” students from two-year institutions without requiring that they first complete a two-year degree. Further, there are wide inconsistencies among transfer agreements.³¹

The Edvance Foundation study also suggests that only a handful of community colleges feed the pool of transfers to private colleges and universities, with the biggest obstacle being the credit transfer evaluations. On the university side of the equation, evaluators can be inconsistent in applying academic admission standards. On the student side, the transfer process can be daunting, especially for first-generation students. Standardized admission requirements and early identification programs to create a seamless pathway for promising students could address these issues, but such programs are limited. Additionally, barriers do not disappear once the transfer student makes it onto campus. The level of support varies. For example, less than half of the surveyed private colleges offered tailored orientation programs for transfer students.³²

The issue of how to create a seamless pathway for transfers to four-year colleges has been the subject of considerable attention, especially by private groups like the Bill & Melinda Gates and Lumina Foundations, among others. They seek a scaled-up solution and turn to public college and university systems to implement foundation-backed programs.³³ There are also numerous local and regional examples, like the Campaign for College Opportunity, which advocates for reforms to streamline the process for community college students looking to transfer into

the California State University system.³⁴ Other promising efforts, like the Achieving the Dream initiative, also work through the morass at the state level to improve transfer rates.³⁵ Whether these efforts translate successfully into persistence and timely graduation rates remains unclear.

The failure to commit fully to transfer students reduces their use to “fillers,” who round out and complete a class; or serve as midyear replacements for the drop in admissions that occurs after a sharper than expected summer melt among accepted students who have paid their deposits, its first semester counterpart; or as a replacement for students studying off campus in the spring term, including those in study abroad programs. In an important way, the use of transfer students who support or meet missed institutional revenue targets is the weak underbelly of the admissions process. Transfers cover revenue losses but they typically do not receive the same care and feeding of their cohort in traditionally recruited classes.³⁶ Transfer students follow what the Commission on the Future of Undergraduate Education calls a “multi-directional transfer swirl.” The commission found that almost one-third of students transferred or were simultaneously enrolled in two institutions over six years. A surprising number were lateral transfers; 15 percent of two-year students transferred to another two-year college, and 17.2 percent of students at four-year colleges switched to two-year institutions.³⁷

If enrollment is code for revenue, there is also an expense side beyond administrative costs in the form of institutional financial aid. Financial aid can come in a number of forms, but at the institutional level, students basically receive a financial aid discount off the posted sticker price. Some may also receive scholarship funds, often endowed, in addition to their state and federal grants and loans and the institutional financial aid discount. College administrators live or die in tuition-dependent institutions by whether net tuition revenue rises or decreases over time. The average tuition discount is now close to 50 percent at

many private colleges. At their public research counterparts, the percentage of first year students receiving institutional grant aid increased from 36 to 52 percent over ten years (2003–13).³⁸ This yield is one important measure of institutional vitality. For students, the corresponding number is the total indebtedness held at graduation—in 2016 two-thirds of graduates had debt, and their average debt has been estimated to approach \$35,000.³⁹ While this is a shocking number, it is also important to remember that smaller debts matter, too. Students with smaller loans are actually likelier to default than are those who did not finish their degree.⁴⁰

What is perhaps most surprising about enrollment operations across American higher education is how much money is spent with consultants, who provide a range of advising, research, strategy, and assessment services. Colleges often narrowly search for lists of students from zip codes of pricey neighborhoods in targeted cities, of qualified women, minority, and low socioeconomic candidates, and for students in new markets to deepen their pool of good candidates. This is understandable but almost unseemly at times. These efforts to broaden the admissions base are sometimes blind efforts devoid of research. What these institutions need most, however, is good research, which links strategy, outreach, and financial goals to outcomes, to produce a model against which objective metrics can be set.

This requires a working financial aid model. Tuition discounts may be “paper” money, but discounted financial aid has tremendous impact on a college’s bottom line. It’s an area that colleges and universities—whether public or private—treat more as an art than a science. At tuition-dependent institutions, it often means profound disruption if admission targets or financial aid assumptions are missed in August. A good financial aid model looks at an institution holistically, doing a deep dive into such factors as who comes and who doesn’t, the competitive market position, family income, student academic profiles, and a variety of additional student, family, and market inputs. It matches the aid

package on a macro level to specific institutional strategic goals. The best financial aid models offer packages that effectively predict likely applicant reactions to their package. And most important, a financial aid model puts a brake on mindless efforts to throw money at applicants with the precision of darts tossed at a dartboard by amateurs. A good financial aid model relates strategy to outcomes linking admissions and financial aid into a coherent enrollment plan.

It is essential that stakeholders recognize how enrollment works. Admission is not a perk that trustees can offer to friends with sons like Cameron Payne. Enrollment is not a right; it is an aspiration of each applicant. The weak admissions profile of many institutions in a market-driven business environment assures that most students who are qualified still have a range of good options available. But for those charged with fiduciary responsibility for American colleges, a working knowledge of enrollment practices, recognition of their impact on a college's financial health, and an understanding of the competitive strengths and weaknesses of a college's admissions profile are essential. It is equally important that faculty recognize that they also have a responsibility to work to strengthen and maintain enrollment. This requires the careful design of academic programs and some skill at marketing them, using both inputs and outcomes, like placement at graduation.

The days of recruitment through the four-color glossy brochure are gone. The best safeguard for enrollment officials across the country is to concentrate more on the science than the art of enrollment, working with the CFO to determine how best to build a profile using admission blocks that assure not only stability in each admissions cycle but also some success at moving the needle to meet broader institutional goals. It is especially important to review the expected demographic shifts and measure them against practical institutional strategic goals. It may be that traditional admission building blocks using standard recruitment approaches can no longer provide the level of net

tuition revenue that a college needs. It is likely that the gap will not be filled by sources of revenue like auxiliary enterprises, endowment drawdown, or fund-raising. The solution must begin by finding a workable, predictive financial aid model that recognizes that the expense side of enrollment must be managed carefully.

Good enrollment planning mandates a campus-wide effort to define the reasons that the college contributes to global society. If the message on the quality of its academic programs is murky, then the predictability of enrollment revenue suffers accordingly. If enrollment is code for revenue, it is also more than simply revenue. As noted earlier, the enrollment office is the chief fund-raising arm of a college or university; it is also its principal marketing division. The enrollment office is the first public face of a college to many stakeholders, shaping perceptions, explaining values, and broadcasting momentum.

This is the business part of the equation, mixed with the human interaction necessary to explain the “why’s” to applicants and their families. Enrollment is about momentum. Students know it when they feel it. To match their enthusiasm, applicants must fit their sense of self into a well-articulated institutional sense of place. Enrollment requires planning, ingenuity, flexibility, and creativity. As colleges shift emphasis within programming by reacting to demographics, technology, and costs, it is critical that they update their enrollment tools and deepen their understanding of enrollment practices and their expectations of outcomes. They must recognize that, like advancement, enrollment is a metric that can be measured and modeled. It is best to be prepared for an uneven evolution within American higher education by matching an annual admissions cycle to careful planning for where a college wants to be over the longer term.

One way of thinking about the enrollment message might be: “It’s about the education, stupid.”

Advancement

Billion-dollar campaigns have become a regular news item, with forty-eight under way and ninety-two completed in 2015.¹ However, for most colleges and universities, the news about fund-raising is not good. Annual giving by alumni has dropped from 18 percent in 1990 to less than 9 percent in 2013.² “If we continue down the current path, the future won’t be as bright. Our institutions and alumni will lose something if we rely on mega-gifts to support advancement efforts. Beholden to a relative few, our schools will give up flexibility and autonomy. Our alumni will give up something just as important: their voice,” notes Dan Allenby.³ Further, the nonprofit sector continues to grow, with a record high of 1.41 million organizations registered with the Internal Revenue Service in 2013.⁴ All of these organizations are competing with colleges and universities for a finite pool of charitable giving. According to a 2014 survey of approximately one thousand colleges and universities, 28.6 percent of the total funding raised that year went to the top twenty institutions.⁵ For the nearly four thousand colleges and universities not in the top 1 percent, advancement is accomplished by a committed president and a dogged (usually

small) staff who recommit every year to raising the most funds possible from a limited, and often fatigued, donor base. This is the perpetual state of modern advancement teams.

Advancement, itself, is a nebulous term, seemingly created to mask the underlying process of identifying, informing, cultivating, and ultimately asking donors to give their wealth for the benefit of a particular institution. This process can be divided into three components: development, communications, and alumni relations. Development is charged with the cultivation of donors and making requests for giving. Communications is charged with keeping the various constituents informed and handling inquiries. Alumni relations is charged with maintaining an ongoing connection with alumni and executing events (e.g., homecoming) that keep alumni engaged with the institution. The advancement organization must also work with the other units of the institution, particularly enrollment, to maintain an integrated message that works equally well for prospective students, longtime alumni, prospective donors, and others. Together, they work to “advance” the college or university.

For mission-driven organizations like colleges and universities, this process can be particularly fraught because some constituents believe that it somehow diminishes the institution in the process. Soliciting support can certainly be unsavory and even craven if done in a way that does not celebrate the mission of the institution, the benefit to the students, and the remarkable outcomes of the alumni. However, when done the right way, in an open and honest manner, it affirms everything for which the college or university stands. Advancement can truly be a vehicle for moving the mission of the institution forward. This chapter examines that process, its component units, challenges, and opportunities. The advent of social media is certainly having a substantial influence on advancement, and we examine that influence as well.

Development is the heart and soul of advancement. It is, quite literally, how the money comes in, but it is also one of the most

subtle and often complicated processes. Asking for gifts, especially large ones, goes far beyond euphemistic “friend-raising.” It is a process of truly getting to know an individual, finding out what is important to him or her, understanding what resources he or she might bring to bear and on what timeline, and finally making a request that respects all of these factors. This process is often at odds with institutional plans and prerogatives, which tend toward definitiveness and urgency. This is where institutional leadership—namely, the president and development head, and board leadership, in the form of a development council—are most helpful in aligning the two. However, before exploring leadership, it is helpful to understand the different ways that charitable contributions come in.

Most colleges and universities have annual funds or campaigns to raise money that directly supports that year’s operating budget. This is, by far, the largest source of unrestricted funds and is critical to the normal functioning of the institution. Colleges and universities also routinely engage in capital campaigns to raise funding for capital projects, like buildings, and endowed funds, like scholarships. These contributions tend to be restricted, based on the intended use of the gift, and do not usually have a direct effect on the operating budget. In recent years, these two distinct efforts have been merged at many institutions, creating omnibus “comprehensive” campaigns. This has occurred for several reasons, some better than others. Since the same donor base is often solicited for both annual and capital gifts, a comprehensive approach recognizes that the average individual does not significantly distinguish between the two. Donors will likely give the same cumulative total, thus the comprehensive approach provides more discretion in where the funds go.

However, another factor driving institutions toward the comprehensive campaign is a near arms race in massive campaign totals. These totals often ignore the extended time frames of the campaigns and the institution’s historical fundraising rate. The

total becomes the focus. This can drive some very negative behaviors. It encourages the counting of everything, like tax credits and in-kind contributions, which are not fungible cash. This can lead to situations in which the campaign total is piling up while there is not enough capital in hand to begin major building projects. It can also lead to a lack of attention to annual fundraising goals, which are embedded in the operating budget. Either scenario is a recipe for disillusionment or worse. It might be wise to take a lesson from the past and stick to annual campaigns and capital campaigns, at least internally. Also, these discrete campaigns can be targeted for more urgent needs. A targeted capital campaign, sometimes referred to as a micro-campaign, can range from a capital building project down to support of a club or team (even based on the outcome of a game).

In any case, campaigns should be sized in a way that demonstrates real progress (e.g., an endowed chair or a new building) while also being achievable. This can be a delicate balance. On the one hand, the institution and its leadership want to raise as much money as possible. On the other hand, the institution, especially its leadership, does not want to fall short of the goal; nothing can tamp down donor enthusiasm more than missing a highly publicized fundraising goal. Therefore, the process of sizing any campaign should recognize this natural tension and tend toward aspiration with conservatism. It is always acceptable to exceed a goal. What donor is not excited about exceeding a campaign goal? This can be a good point at which to bring in an independent development consultant. A consultant can do a wealth analysis of your known donor base, and more importantly, sit down with your largest donors and get an idea of what they might have in mind to give. Often, it is easier for committed donors to have that conversation with an objective third party—rather than disappoint a president with whom they have built a relationship. In conclusion, the Goldilocks principle of dynamic equilibrium produces notable progress while insuring against failure to meet the goal.

No matter how campaigns are conceived, sized, or implemented, leadership is critical to success. Increasingly, that leadership comes from the president and casts him or her in the role of “Fund-raiser-in-Chief.” J. Bradford Hodson notes, “As with nearly all institutional activities, the university president shoulders the ultimate responsibility for the success of the fundraising program. So much of what precedes effective cultivation and solicitation of major gifts must come from the president. No other institutional officer can create the vision, establish university-wide priorities, or make the case for support as effectively as the president.” This vision is regularly embodied in the institution’s strategic plan; however, it is the president who must personify this vision. She or he must be able to tell the story of the institution in a way that transforms it into a living and personal thing. Of course, this comes back to outcomes, as Hodson goes on to note: “As the primary spokesperson for the institution, the president is expected to articulate how donors’ charitable gifts will enhance the academy. Major donors in particular like to feel as if they are being involved in something strategic and well thought out. They want to know about the president’s vision and the institution’s strategic direction, along with the resources the university needs to get there.”⁶

The president must be available to the college’s or university’s various constituencies, but in the case of fund-raising, the major donors will consume the bulk of the president’s time. Hodson writes, “Individuals who themselves have great wealth or who manage wealth on behalf of a corporation or foundation often respond best when talking to the man or woman in charge—the president.” The cultivation of these donors is essentially the same as with any other donor. It involves building a genuine relationship, not just a discussion of the institution and its needs. Certainly, a savvy donor understands why the president is interested. However, that interest is just a beginning. Ultimately, the donor is giving as much to the person as to the institution, thus the relationship becomes the basis for this

decision. It also serves as a vehicle for understanding the donor's interests. "Conversations between the president and prospective major donors should also focus on what the donor wants his or her gift to accomplish. In the end, the case for support—why the donor should make a major gift to support a pre-identified institutional need—should be centered on the donor's aspirations for the gift," observes Hodson.⁷

While the president is the lynchpin, she or he cannot be the primary fund-raiser for the institution. The presidency is simply too multifaceted to allow it. The professional development staff and the development council also play pivotal roles. Depending on the size of the college or university, the professional development staff may range from two or three to dozens of persons. The structure depends on the size, but in most cases, it will take the form of a senior staff member (usually a member of the president's cabinet) and a cadre of development officers reporting to him or her either directly or indirectly. The development head and development officers will all bear a certain responsibility for the institution's fund-raising goals. However, unlike the campaign goals, these goals should be aggressively sized. They are confidential and used specifically to judge performance, so they should be calculated to maximize results. Like lobbyists or salespeople, development officers have every incentive to set the bar low to be certain that they meet their targets. This mentality can quickly create "paper pushers" who do not actively engage with donors to build the relationships required for successful fund-raising. The ideal development office is made up of committed "road warriors," whose time in the office is usually after hours or on weekends, catching up after visits have been made.

As discussed previously, the president and development officers initiate and nurture close relationships with major donors, alumni, athletics supporters, and parents. This is critical to the process, and in the case of the president, it presents no conflict of interest. Fund-raising is a process that directly supports the

president's vision for the institution. In the case of other development officers, vice presidents on down, these close relationships, especially with trustees, can inadvertently or deliberately lead to situations outside and beyond the president's influence or control. These "side" relationships, or personal "friendships," can circumvent the proper governance process. While this may not seem like a serious hazard, it can cause major rifts in leadership if it hamstrings the president or creates an environment more focused on job security for the staff member than the good of the institution. It is important for the development staff to understand the boundaries and assiduously maintain them. This is absolutely essential to the normal function of governance and cannot be sacrificed for any reason, no matter how well intentioned.

Beyond the development staff, a development or campaign council can be critical and should not be overlooked. The council is a group of trustees, major donors, alumni, athletics boosters, and parents who are committed to the goals of the campaign. Ideally, this commitment goes beyond their pledge to the campaign. With the right mix of individuals, the council will have a broad set of relationships with the potential donor base. These relationships (personal, business, or both) can be a valuable lever in the fund-raising process. They can be useful for getting access to donors and also for cajoling them at appropriate moments. They can also be used for back-channel feedback, in either direction, to provide more nuance to the process. It is one thing for the president or a development officer to contact you; it is an entirely different thing for your college roommate, who just happens to be on the development council, to contact you. It is likely that you are going to be more open and honest with the lifelong friend. There is nothing nefarious about this as long as the communication and intentions are honest. In fact, most major donors are happy to help. For those who are not, some coaching might be appropriate. Otherwise, a pledge to be extremely judicious with their connections is often a good

motivator. In the end, it is all done for the good of the college or university. That should be the mantra of any development organization.

Development, however, is only one component of successful advancement. If advancement only reached out to one person at a time, it would almost certainly fail. That is where communications comes in. Communications is far more than the traditional public relations office: issuing press releases, scheduling interviews, and answering questions: it is really the marketing arm of the college. Successful marketing is not a disconnected, poorly integrated series of pitches on innumerable college fiefdoms. Such a communications strategy largely fails to define and shape the look and feel of a college and its academic and residential-life programs. Worse still is a communications department that reactively processes requests with no strategy at all. The best approach is integrated marketing, “a holistic approach to organizational communication [that] combines the power of marketing, advertising, and public relations and involves the entire organization in communicating a consistent message.”⁸ This is not a new approach, having been used successfully in higher education for twenty years, but it can be a powerful tool.

Integrated marketing puts institutional strategy front and center. It usually begins with a task force. Larry Lauer says that “members should include the most talented marketers, strategic planners, writers, designers, and event planners at your institution. They should represent all departments interested in marketing the campus—admissions, advancement, alumni relations, continuing education, the bookstore, and athletics, to name a few.” The goal is to have “the kind of big-picture discussions that a group of this large size can handle. The task force might discuss campus strengths and weaknesses, mission and vision, niche and quality. Its primary job should be to get everyone in the institution to agree on your main messages. . . . Later, the task force will break into smaller, project-oriented sub-groups

to do the actual work.”⁹ The goal is to develop a plan that moves all of the various college units to a common, focused message.

Once that integrated message has been defined and understood, communication efforts are easily determined: they should always be in the service of that message. These efforts might involve traditional media, such as a quarterly magazine or print advertising. However, social media is much more likely to be the primary vehicle. According to a 2016 Council on the Advancement and Support of Education survey, “nearly nine out of 10 respondents (86 percent) . . . agreed that social media is a more important part of the communications and marketing mix at their institutions than it was three years ago.”¹⁰ A 2015 Pew Research Center study found that “nearly two-thirds of American adults (65%) use social networking sites, up from 7% when [we] began systematically tracking social media usage in 2005” (fig. 4.1).¹¹ The same study found that 90 percent of young adults (ages 18 to 29) use social media (fig. 4.2).¹² The CASE survey goes on to note that “Facebook continues to be the single most important social channel for advancement.”¹³ Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, and Instagram are the other four that make up the five social media most used by colleges and universities. Interestingly, Instagram is the fastest growing, with 65 percent of colleges and universities using it in 2016.¹⁴

These same institutions are also devoting significant funding to boosting and promoting posts and to outright advertising on the social networks. The first two are unique to social media in that they affect the function of the platform itself. Boosting expands the reach of a particular post by dropping it in the feed like any other content. Promoting is a more targeted approach, in which the buyer specifies a target audience beyond simply fans.¹⁵ Social media advertising is largely similar to advertising anywhere else on the web, based on targets and repetitions specified by the buyer. In addition, most social networks provide paid tools to analyze the audience and determine ways in which

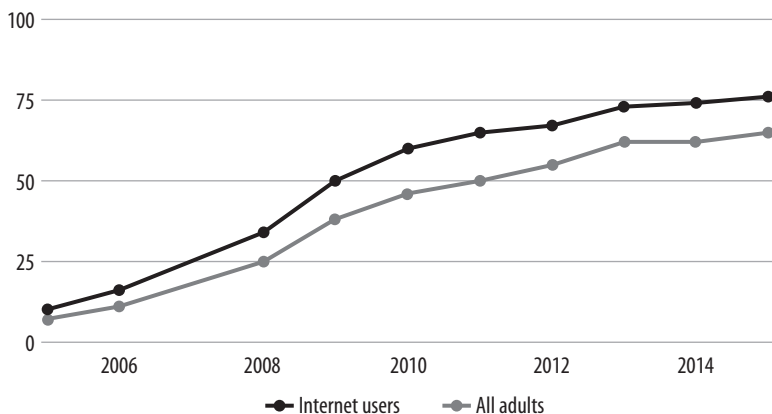


Figure 4.1. Percentage of all American Adults and Internet-using Adults Who Use at Least One Social Networking Site. From Andrew Perrin, "Social Media Usage: 2005-2015," <http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/10/08/2015/Social-Networking-Usage-2005-2015>.

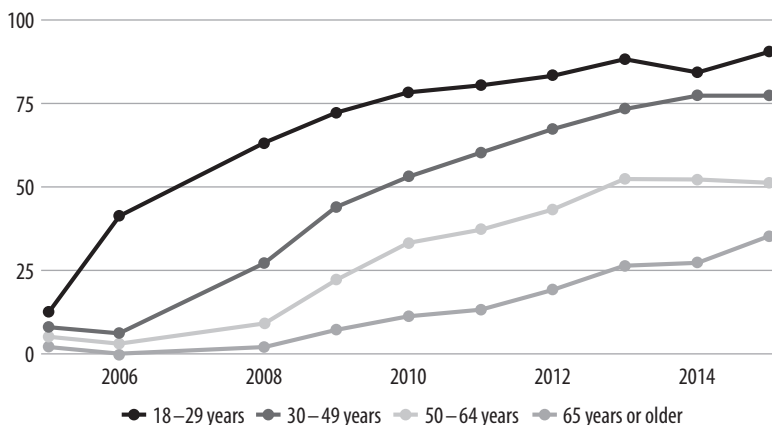


Figure 4.2. Among all American Adults, Percentage Who Use Social Networking Sites, by Age. From Andrew Perrin, "Social Media Usage: 2005-2015," <http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/10/08/2015/Social-Networking-Usage-2005-2015>.

advertising might be more efficacious. Combined with an integrated marketing plan, social networks offer a sophisticated approach that is unprecedented in the history of college advancement. One respondent to the CASE survey noted that, “for students, social media is where they are. . . . The digital realm is where they get information. We have to exist there to connect with them.”¹⁶ Communications must be fully cognizant of and committed to this reality to thrive in the early twenty-first century.

With any technology, there is also a dark side. These platforms are at their core egalitarian, open, and unbounded. For the purpose of free expression, this is truly a great step forward. For the purpose of delivering an integrated message and image, it can be an exceptional challenge. This can come in the form of a New York University faculty member trumpeting, “Coming: EXPLOSIVE proof of uni admins’ malfeasance hiring, promoting & protecting #frauds solely bc of identity & that’s 1/2 of it!” on Twitter. This led rapidly to his going on paid leave.¹⁷ Putting the issue of academic freedom aside for a moment, this sort of expression is the natural fodder of social media. There is a detrimental, even sinister, side of social media in which the college’s position can be regularly misinterpreted, reputations can be tarnished, and individuals on campuses citing academic freedom can say whatever they wish, whether true or fiction. Any institution engaged in that medium must be ready to deal with the potential ramifications on an ongoing basis.

Beyond the “bomb throwers” and the “haters,” social media messages are prized when they are genuine, spontaneous, passionate, humorous—in a word, real. College communications can quickly start to look like anything but real. The college president who uses Facebook or Twitter in a way that is obviously contrived (staffed out) does nothing positive for the college’s message. The grassroots campaign that is certainly “Astroturf” does not advance the cause. Alternately, the “Sophomore Welcome,” a spirited salutation by Nicholas Selby at Georgia Tech’s

2013 convocation, was clearly genuine, even euphoric. It made national news and has been viewed millions of times.¹⁸ In 2010, Brian Rosenberg, president of Macalester College, created a day-in-the-life parody for President's Day, which included his driving a snowblower and serving as college mascot. While it had a more modest viewership, it had a measurably positive effect on Macalester's annual fund. Rosenberg writes, "the longstanding notion that colleges can carefully shape and control their public image is antiquated. . . . Messages we send out, if they are not ignored, are reshaped and restated as if caught in an increasingly elaborate game of 'telephone.' That does not mean our initial messages are less important. To the contrary, we must devote more care to them than ever as we try to anticipate the ways in which they might be adapted and reinterpreted."¹⁹

Beyond the internet and social media, communications still uses a great deal of traditional messaging and media. The challenge is to balance all of these efforts in a way that maximizes the marketing impact within the constraints of budget and time. The area that often requires the most effort is admissions. Colleges and universities typically meld old and new media efforts in an attempt to reach potential students (and their parents) wherever they may find them. Unlike other marketing efforts (e.g., fund-raising), there is immense pressure, from many different constituencies, surrounding these communications. Since admissions is charged with annual goals, communications is critical to achieving these goals. Therefore, admissions often dominates communication efforts, especially during recruiting season. This tail that wags the dog can compromise any integrated marketing effort if the institution's leadership does not assiduously maintain a strategic outlook when it comes to communications. If done right, communications done for admissions can serve multiple purposes or be efficiently repurposed for fund-raising, alumni relations, and so on. The key is to have a strategy and structure that maintains the integrated marketing plan despite the pressures from various constituencies.

Alumni relations has grown from the lone alumni secretary of a century ago to a significant third leg of any successful advancement effort. In a way, alumni relations continuously re-recruits former students, stoking their interest in their alma mater. At some institutions, this re-recruitment is more than a metaphor. At DePaul University, for example, alumni relations was moved to enrollment management because alumni were a significant target market for graduate programs and other lifelong learning opportunities.²⁰ However, in most institutions, alumni relations is a function of advancement. Unlike development and communications, it relies heavily on alumni themselves for the function of their office and programs. Alumni volunteers significantly amplify the work of the alumni relations office. For this reason, it is helpful to think of alumni as insiders.

Institutions, and especially advancement organizations, usually divide constituencies into two groups: external (e.g., prospective students) and internal (e.g., faculty). It is a mistake to view alumni as an external constituency. They have literally lived on campus and are forever a part of the college or university. Arguably, beyond current students, they are the ultimate insiders. Using them in this way can be a substantial point of leverage for alumni relations. Their skills, connections, and knowledge can all be used in the service of their alma mater and fellow alumni. With proper coordination and support from the alumni affairs office, these volunteers can form a phalanx, offering a wide variety of activities and opportunities. The more meaningful their service, the better: this group of talented professionals has plenty of opportunities for service. The key is to identify and use them to the best of their ability for the service of the institution.

Alumni boards can be very helpful to the alumni affairs office in identifying, recruiting, and retaining these volunteers. The alumni board can take on significant responsibility. Certainly, it can serve as the primary outreach organ, greatly amplifying the work of the full-time alumni relations staff. The

alumni board can also be a substantial partner in fund-raising. However, this is not without its potential pitfalls. While the alumni board wants to be engaged in all aspects of the institution, it does not want to be a mouthpiece for the development office. Effectively engaging alumni goes far beyond tapping their fund-raising potential. The last thing that the alumni board wants is to be perceived as a crass instrument for fund-raising. It wants to be both a collaborator and thought leader in engaging the alumni. Ultimately, an effective partnership between the head of the alumni relations office and the chair of the alumni board is probably the most important element. This partnership will do more to leverage the alumni board than anything else.

In recent years, alumni affairs professionals have noticed a generational shift in attitude among alumni. Porter Garner, Texas A&M alumnus and CEO of their Association of Former Students, says, "I've talked to older graduates and seen them cry when they talk about A&M and how they can never repay the school for what was given to them."²¹ Younger alumni, on the other hand, "grumble about a variety of concerns, from the price of athletics tickets to a perceived lack of outreach from faculty they worked with as students. They're less invested in Texas A&M and the alumni association, yet they have the loudest voices. And they expect to be served before they give back," reports Scully.²² In surveying alumni relations directors, Scully noted a trend: "The consensus is that graduates' expectations of goods and services from their alma maters have dramatically increased in the past decade, and alumni directors need a remedy for the epidemic." This trend can seem unsettling without considering the context. The alumni in this cohort went to school, graduated, and began their careers (or looked for jobs without success) during, and shortly after, the Great Recession. Historically, they have the largest debt of any alumni cohort, and they struggle with difficult economic realities.²³ Millennials have half the net wealth of Baby Boomers at the same age, and their wages are 20 percent less.²⁴

This situation challenges the institution to act boldly and proactively. Scully observes that “institutions can help quell this antagonism by illustrating a commitment to supporting alumni beyond graduation. Many colleges and universities have found that offering enhanced career services to alumni is a useful tool in combating employment concerns and opens the door for meaningful engagement.”²⁵ She goes on to illustrate this with examples from Smith College and Stonehill College. Smith added an additional staff member to focus entirely on alumnae career support, primarily delivered through webinars. These webinars were so popular that attendance exceeded their annual reunion attendance by 20 percent. At Stonehill, alumni relations partnered with career services to host events at companies that employed multiple Stonehill graduates.²⁶ These events introduced recent graduates to alumni in positions of authority at these companies, clearly creating potential opportunities for employment, mentorship, and further connections within the profession. It is these connections that, more than anything, demonstrate the power of the alumni network for individual graduates and for the college or university itself.

Similar connections can be developed with current and former parents. In the past, parent relations was often left to student life, but this is changing markedly as donor fatigue becomes a more serious issue. Advancement operations have begun to realize the true value of parent relations. Harriet Meyers writes, “Parent volunteers say that the access that comes with involvement—and the knowledge that comes from that access—keep them connected to their college-age children and committed to the future of their children’s alma maters.”²⁷ Unlike other donors, parents can see the immediate effects of their philanthropy on the student experience. Whether it be lighting the soccer field or buying a scientific instrument, the improved experience is immediate. In addition to fund-raising, parents make exceedingly good liaisons to many different communities and constituencies because they have relationships that the

institution's leadership and alumni simply do not have. Like the alumni board, a parents' board or council can be exceedingly effective at marshaling volunteers, fund-raising, and building new relationships—everything an advancement organization could hope for.

While these groups can be advancement gold, they can make trustees and senior administration nervous. The worry is that the agendas of these boards and constituents can become narrowly focused on their own set of (self-)interests and priorities. These may deviate significantly from the college's or university's priorities as determined and stewarded by the administration and trustees. They may also divert attention away from these goals and priorities or, worse, cause constituents to question them outright. Nevertheless, neither of these should be reasons not to engage parents and alumni in significant ways. They should be viewed as challenges to be overcome because of the value of these groups to the institution. One way to ameliorate these potential problems is to name a trustee representative to the alumni board and to the parents' council. These representatives need not be alumni or parents; however, most boards of trustees have a significant number of both who would be interested in serving in this role. The role of the trustee representative is twofold: make sure that the goals and priorities are aligned and serve as a liaison between the groups. All three bodies become part of an effective advancement operation by playing their differing roles. Trustees work as stewards and approvers of policy, alumni serve as keepers of the flame and builders of momentum (often through residential life), and members of the parents' council function as the president's best supporters when making immediate change because they see their work in "real time" four-year increments consistent with their child's attendance.

One final group bears mentioning, and that is the faculty. In shared governance, the role of the faculty is to "own" the academic program, constantly assessing, refining, and improving it. Without a doubt, that is their number-one priority and

prerogative. With that said, the faculty are often the single strongest and most compelling connection that alumni and parents have to the institution. These mentors are the ones whom alumni remember so fondly and with whom current students are often in the process of forming a lifelong bond. Alumni and parent relations would be remiss in not seizing the opportunity for advancement, using faculty effectively in donor relationships, communications and marketing, and lifelong learning opportunities. With technology, this connection can be facilitated and maintained in ways that were impossible until just a few years ago. It behooves advancement teams to thoroughly consider how faculty are involved in all aspects of their work. Faculty certainly understand the importance of advancement and are usually eager to engage, especially if that engagement is with alumni who are the result of their life's work. It can be equally beneficial and rewarding for all involved.

Modern advancement goes far beyond “friend-raising”—it is a professional approach to all aspects of marketing, communications, development, and constituent relations. Success demands that the college or university take seriously the effort in ways that might not have existed even twenty years ago. As noted repeatedly in the last chapter, revenue from enrollment and auxiliary enterprises is flat. In this operating environment, advancement becomes increasingly important; however, fundraising has also been experiencing a flattened effect. In both cases, institutional creativity and innovation are more important than ever. Running an institution in this environment requires an ongoing willingness to reinvent it—this is advancement in its most literal and fundamental sense.

Academic Affairs

College and university missions vary widely. A community college may emphasize vocational training, while a research university emphasizes graduate and professional training. The average four-year college or university is likely to offer a spectrum of majors, from traditional liberal arts disciplines to pre-professional programs. Nevertheless, all of these institutions have the teaching and learning enterprise at their core. The primary agents of this enterprise are the faculty and associated academic support staff, from librarians to remedial tutors. Teaching and learning cannot happen without this dedicated group of individuals. While facilities (e.g., libraries and laboratories) are important, they are not as important as the faculty and academic staff. Indeed, many classes could still be taught if the facilities did not exist. In short, the college is the faculty.

However, this conclusion would seem unlikely based on recent trends in higher education. According to the American Association of University Professors, more than half of faculty appointments are part time.¹ These are a mix of adjunct professors and graduate teaching assistants. The number of “contingent faculty,” full- and part-time non-tenure-track faculty, exceeds

70 percent of all instructional staff.² Worse, average pay for adjunct faculty in 2013 was less than \$3,000 for a three-credit course.³ In two-year rural institutions, the average can be as low as \$1,800 for a three-credit course. These pay levels certainly make it difficult to earn a living wage, especially when they are often cobbled together from several institutions. Even if the contingent faculty member is fortunate enough to find a full-time appointment, the workload required often far exceeds that of permanent faculty. For example, Ocean County College, a community college in New Jersey, instituted lecturer positions in 2011 that required a “7/7” teaching load (i.e., seven three-credit courses per semester) in the fall and spring with additional teaching requirements in the summer term.⁴ For the majority of institutions and faculty, these are the conditions at the core of the teaching and learning enterprise.

This state of affairs has grown prevalent as the underlying financial models for higher education have become more fraught. In failing to deal with systemic financial problems, colleges and universities have begun to compromise the ability of the faculty to function. Traditionally, faculty members have been expected to do far more than teach. Most tenure and promotion systems are built on the assumption of teaching, scholarship, and service. Depending on the type of institution, teaching and mentoring or, alternately, scholarship and research might have primacy. As for service, all colleges and universities need faculty to be available to serve on committees, participate in functions and events, and hold various part-time leadership positions. Shared governance requires that the faculty be available for service. When they are not available owing to onerous requirements for teaching and research, the situation can be resolved by lessening those requirements. When they are not available owing to faculty being predominantly part time (often serving at multiple institutions), the resolution is vexing and can be impossible. It leaves the governance of the institution up to a shrinking cohort of full-time,

tenured or tenure-track faculty, or worse, it marginalizes the faculty entirely.

The faculty certainly has a primary responsibility for the academic program. The regional accrediting organizations routinely reaffirm this role, and it is deeply embedded in the mission of individual institutions. Faculty members also have an important role in understanding and crafting the college's vision, direction, and sense of itself. One reason for this is their long tenures. Board members, administrators, students, and alumni often have a much more circumscribed view of the institution because of their relatively short tenures. Faculty members, on the other hand, are the "keepers of the flame" of institutional memory and history. They also tend to have more divergent points of view than many other constituencies. This is especially true of faculties that are diverse in their cultural, ethnic, socioeconomic, and gender makeup. Unfortunately, faculties remain less diverse than society at large. In a 2013 survey, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* found that almost 82 percent of full professors at four-year institutions were white. Even among assistant professors, almost 65 percent were white. Only Asians made up 9 percent or more by rank. Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans were 5 percent or less.⁵

Even if faculty service requirements are maintained and supported, other factors can inhibit the ability for shared governance to operate effectively manner. For example, if the faculty adopts an academic calendar that only allows service in October, November (early), December, February, March, and April, then the institution is without their input for a majority of the year. This can have a crippling effect when the business cycle of the college or university operates continuously. The academic cycle and the business cycle must be reconciled in favor of the business cycle, with appropriate but reasonable compensation for faculty serving outside of the academic calendar year. Faculty working within the academic calendar year should expect

service to be a substantial part of their job, not a distant third to teaching and scholarship. In this way, only exceptional work beyond normal service should be compensated with stipends or release time. As active shared governors, faculty should seize upon their role with gusto.

Of course, faculty governance is often hampered by bureaucratic legacy more than by an individual or institutional commitment to service. The committee structure often suffers from several maladies. First, standing committees often accrete over time. This creates committees with overlapping responsibilities and charges that may no longer even be relevant, much less useful. Second, ad hoc committees accrete, as well, further diluting responsibility and function. Third, these committees all require faculty service, and faculty time is limited. Fourth, service is the least rewarded part of faculty work (far behind research and teaching at many institutions). Fifth, this convoluted structure impedes both speed and function, thereby impeding improvement and innovation (or even agility in a changing environment). In this situation, it is incumbent upon the faculty and academic leadership to make assessment of committees and their structure a top priority. This is not a process done once and forgotten, but a process of continuous improvement, with ongoing goals of efficiency and efficacy.

Focus is also critical. Weakness in coordinated governance is often due to a lack of focus on areas specific to faculty. As noted above, the faculty has primary responsibility for the academic program. This differentiates their work in and importance to shared governance and gives them significant and determining influence over the education program, the heart of the collegiate enterprise. It is what they primarily contribute to governance of the academy. Too often, focus wanders to the trivial (e.g., quality of salt in the dining hall) or to that which is beyond their purview (e.g., investment of the endowment). Focus will determine how seriously their thoughts are considered and incorporated into policy.

This focus extends to an understanding of the college's or university's budget model and projections. While every faculty member does not need to be deeply knowledgeable about every facet of the budget, the faculty, in general, do need to have a functional understanding of the institution's finances. This financial literacy can be thoughtfully encouraged by an administration that is open and committed. Grinnell College is an excellent example. Kevin Kiley writes, "the administration [is] going to great lengths to educate the faculty, staff, students, and alumni on the financial challenges the college faces. They are hosting a series of town-hall meetings, posting presentations online, and are even developing a computer station where users can play with the college's budget models and projections."⁶ With financial literacy comes collective responsibility; faculty are not just aware of the budget but involved with the process. This involvement can attenuate the often adversarial nature of the relationship between faculty and administration. Faculty can do their own analyses and present their own conclusions. For example, new programs are often proposed by faculty only to have administration demonstrate all of the financial reasons why they will not work. In this active model of shared governance, the faculty leadership presents the program along with a financial justification, including costs and revenue. The responsibility shifts and is shared equally.

Of course, institutional structure can be as important as faculty engagement in insuring the proper functioning of shared governance. In an extreme example, Devon Douglas-Bowers writes, "Take the University of Texas at Austin, where President Bill Powers has 17 administrators on his staff, including two 'deputies,' an executive assistant and multiple assistants to the assistants. The provost has 10 'vice provosts' working for him (each with staff); the 'director of diversity and community engagement' had 14 'key' administrators and an unknown number of lesser workers," etc.⁷ Clearly, bureaucracies often get out of hand and impair the functioning of an institution. In addition

to adding layer upon layer of processes, structures of this sort are quite costly. However, the financial costs may not be the worst of it; the lack of institutional agility can be far costlier.

Rather than unwind a structure as convoluted as the University of Texas at Austin's, consider the restructuring done at Berea College in 2010 and 2011. Berea is a liberal arts college in rural Kentucky with approximately 1,600 students and 132 full-time faculty members. It has the unusual distinction of not charging tuition. The institution's \$1.1 billion endowment (2015) and annual giving supports the bulk of the budget.⁸ However, that means that the budget can be put under immense strain by financial downturns. That was certainly the case during the Great Recession, and it revealed structural inadequacies. Rather than shrink from the challenge, the college set in motion a restructuring process. Stephanie Browner, Berea's academic vice president and dean of the faculty at the time, wrote:

We began with the premise that faculty must drive this process because changing structures will not succeed unless they include those who must implement the change. As organizational scholars know, new administrative structures will not, in and of themselves, change culture or practice. Some schools have undertaken academic restructuring from the top down, beginning with decisions by the Board of Trustees to eliminate departments or with decisions by a president or provost about how academic departments will be realigned into larger divisions. Some may find this approach appropriate and successful, but at Berea the process has had faculty input every step of the way—from conception to implementation.⁹

Berea's strategic plan called for a new structure that facilitated "curricular, co-curricular, and pedagogical collaborations and interconnections, while maintaining strong majors." The problem was that academic majors were housed in many small academic departments that did not "foster conversations across disciplines and majors." This problem will be familiar to most

academics, as it exists on most campuses to a greater or lesser degree. However, with fewer than 150 faculty members, the lack of conversation was clearly due to the structure. To tackle the problem, “four teams of roughly 10 faculty were asked to develop two possible designs. Each team worked for a month and drafted not only two designs but full reports that offered provocative and thorough commentary on a host of issues that academic restructuring raises.”¹⁰ This work was informed by research on the history of academic departments and organizational behavior, among other things. Ultimately, a team that included faculty members and the dean synthesized it into three proposed designs for a new academic structure. It is important to note that all of this work was done during the summer, so it was unimpeded by other priorities. In mid-September, the faculty came together for a day-and-a-half retreat to assess and debate each potential structure. Afterward, another synthesis team went to work developing a final proposal, which eliminated departments and divided the academic structure into six divisions. Browner notes, “The model proposed changes which ensure that the divisional structure is not simply the addition of another layer of bureaucracy, but rather a genuine opportunity to achieve . . . structures that facilitate explicit disciplinary and content interconnections and attention to the ‘holistic nature of learning.’”¹¹ In the aftermath of the restructuring, three Berea faculty members wrote, “The impact of the restructuring has been essentially imperceptible to students. Yet the new structure seems to have increased both interdisciplinarity and faculty leadership. . . . On balance, we believe this restructuring has been worthwhile.”¹²

Arizona State University, under the leadership of Michael Crow, has taken a different approach to restructuring, one that is very much top-down and leadership driven. Stripling writes, “Since Crow was named president of Arizona State eight years ago, the university has increasingly organized itself with an eye toward attacking some of the world’s greatest challenges. Rather than divide an institution into academic departments—those are

just “social constructs,” he’d argue—Crow has pushed for new cross-disciplinary organizational structures that are defined by the problems faculty seek to solve—reforming K-12 education, for instance—rather than the disciplines of those who will try to solve them.”¹³ This approach has produced novel academic units, such as the School for the Future of Innovation in Society and the School of Sustainability.¹⁴ Much of it has involved renaming and combining units. Stripling notes that “nine traditional engineering departments were recently combined into five schools. The new groupings include the School for Engineering of Matter, Transport and Energy, which gobbled up the departments of aerospace, chemical, materials science and mechanical engineering.”¹⁵ The argument is that the new structures eliminate silos and encourage collaboration among faculty. According to an ASU press release, they also “result in \$2.7 million in cost savings for the university.”¹⁶

These examples were primarily about efficiency and innovation, not cost. Of course, cost is inherent in the academic enterprise. Frank observes that “while productivity gains have made it possible to assemble cars with only a tiny fraction of the labor that was once required, it still takes four musicians nine minutes to perform Beethoven’s String Quartet No. 4 in C minor, just as it did in the 19th century.”¹⁷ Faculty and associated academic staff are the musicians in this example. Baomol and Bowen first described “the cost disease” in 1966. Bowen summarizes: “In labor-intensive industries such as the performing arts and education, there is less opportunity than in other sectors to increase productivity by, for example, substituting capital for labor. Yet, over time, markets dictate that wages for comparably qualified individuals have to increase at roughly the same rate in all industries. As a result, unit labor costs must be expected to rise relatively faster in the performing arts and education than in the economy overall.”¹⁸ So, any discussion of increased efficiency and innovation in higher education is inherently a discussion of ways to ameliorate the cost disease.

While this is largely true, it can also be a red herring when it comes to capital expenditures. An obvious example of this is the giant football stadium, which only gets used for a half a dozen home games a year. Clearly, this cost has nothing to do with unit labor costs. The less obvious but much larger capital investment is the entire campus during the summer. For three or four months every year, most campuses sit largely unused. It would be hard to imagine a medical center sitting fallow for a third of the year—fallow being the operative term since the academic calendar was largely structured around the planting season. Ironically, for many campuses, summer is the most beautiful and hospitable time of the year. While many colleges and universities have some sort of summer school, it is usually a shadow of the two academic terms. The obvious strategy for maximizing the massive capital investment would be to move to a trimester system with a full term in the summer.

Obvious as it may be, this solution has proven elusive. For example, Purdue University's fifty-year quest for a trimester system began with a faculty committee in the early 1960s. University documentation notes: "In May 1964, an Ad Hoc Committee for the Study of the Restructuring of the Academic Calendar, after nearly two years of study, reported plans for possible year-round operations. They recommended no immediate change, but that in the event year-round operation became necessary, there should be three 15-week semesters, with a traditional summer session, and that a transition calendar should have two 15-week semesters and a traditional summer session, completing the fall semester between Labor Day and Christmas."¹⁹

Agronomist W. J. Daniel returned to the idea in the fall of 1970, writing, "I continue to be very much interested in a tri-semester (sic) system for Purdue." He prepared a two-page proposal for a "tri-semester—fall, regular; winter, regular; but summer; regular, plus some subdivided into 3 equal segments."²⁰ The idea would continue to be debated off and on for decades.

In 2010, faculty prepared a “concept paper” that proposed “a transformation of the university calendar from the current fall and spring semesters . . . to a calendar with three equal trimesters. Each trimester would run 14 weeks of instruction over 15 weeks, with an additional week for finals and a week for preparation, and another week off at the end of the calendar year.”²¹ They discussed the motivation and benefits: “The agricultural calendar with a summer break is no longer necessary. . . . Core courses offered three times per year would allow students to accelerate their degree progress, and would minimize scheduling problems associated with advanced placement credit. Students with means and stamina could complete eight full trimesters in 2 and 2/3 years. In general, more flexibility would result in reduced time-to-degree.” They also discussed practicalities: “Most faculty members would be able to choose (within scheduling limits) which trimester they would prefer to take off from classroom teaching, or they could elect to teach year-round.” Finally, they recommended a “task force to explore the concept further.”²² As of this writing, Purdue continues to study the trimester system, and has named an associate vice provost “to focus on the initiative.”²³

Not every academic effort is as elusive as the trimester system. Elon College (now University) set out to transform its curriculum in the early 1990s. Until that time, Elon had been a middling liberal arts college without much distinction. The goal was to move beyond its traditional curriculum to something more “distinctive” and “future-oriented.”²⁴ The debate was very much as expected—lots of ideas but little consensus. The provost offered a more radical proposal, namely, a shift from three-hour courses to four-hour courses, with the additional time spent on active learning. Of course, it would also mean a substantial reduction in the number of courses taught and required for graduation. Unlike many academic debates that become wars of attrition or stalemates, this debate was swayed by data and analysis. For several years beforehand, every

student entering Elon had been given the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) personality test.²⁵ The MBTI divides personalities into sixteen types, across eight factors: introversion or extroversion, sensing or intuiting, thinking or feeling, and perceiving or judging. An introverted, sensing, thinking, perceiving person would thus be classified ISTP. The director of advising and career services (an assistant professor of history) and the provost noticed that their primary type of student was ENFP, with ESTJ a strong second. Both were extroverted and active types. This led them to “a novel general education program—that is highly experiential to fit the kind of undergraduates that Elon had in its midst.” Keller writes that “the trick . . . was to design an academic program that somehow combined the faculty’s preferred way of teaching with the students preferred way of learning. . . . You can’t design a curriculum for nerds when the students are not nerds.”²⁶ The changes were supported by 60 percent of the faculty. Elon is substantially larger and more selective than it was in the 1990s and still embodies the active learning elements that were pioneered during this transformation process.²⁷

Another significant driver of institutional assessment and change is the regular reaffirmation process colleges and universities go through with their national or regional accreditor. This process is usually shepherded by the academic leadership and institutional research personnel. It involves the submission of several comprehensive reports that measure the institution against the “Principles of Accreditation” established by the accreditor. These documents are followed by offsite and onsite reviews done by a committee of professionals from peer institutions. It is important to remember that the process is peer governed. The reviewers’ goal, like the institution’s goal, is to ensure that students receive a high-quality education. In addition to academic quality, the reviewers also closely scrutinize the financial state of the institution; they want to make certain that the college or university is viable, well-governed, and sustainable. Thus, the

reaffirmation process challenges faculty and trustees alike, making sure that both are fulfilling their roles in the shared governance of the institution.

Beyond the accrediting principles, continuous improvement is usually embodied in the process. For example, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges requires a formal plan for improvement: "Each institution seeking reaffirmation of Accreditation is required to develop a Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). Engaging the wider academic community and addressing one or more issues that contribute to institutional improvement . . . the QEP describes a carefully designed and focused course of action that addresses a well-defined topic or issue(s) related to enhancing student learning."²⁸ In recent years, QEPs have focused on undergraduate research, community service, critical thinking, math skills, visual arts, rhetoric, etc.²⁹ The goal in all of this is to drive institutional innovation and reinvention. While the liberal arts core from the nineteenth century is still viable and relevant to the modern student, the twenty-first century definitely has something to add to the educational experience.

Institutional innovation and improvement are important, but so is individual improvement. As educators, we know and promote the benefits of lifelong learning. When it comes to the academy, we should be equally committed. Faculty and staff development can be tremendously beneficial to both the individual and the institution. Professional development allows individuals to stay current within their fields. Beyond teaching and scholarship, it can help them with career growth and work/life balance. It can also broaden their perspective by focusing on topics like diversity, effectiveness, and quality. Professionals from student affairs, counseling, assessment, athletics, library, information technology, and safety can provide important perspectives in the faculty development process. This is especially true at a residential college or university since so much learning takes place outside the classroom and interactions with

faculty. Faculty and staff development can also focus on areas of broad importance to the institution, for example, student success and inclusion.

Faculty development can also address more systemic challenges. Andrea Beach et al. note that “pressures are high on universities and colleges to do more with less. One manifestation of this pressure is the heightened expectation that faculty members should be persistent and creative in seeking grant funding, not only in research universities but also in comprehensive and liberal arts colleges. . . . These pressures on faculty members mean that professional growth opportunities for faculty must be offered in time-sensitive, efficient forms that honor the multiple pressures on faculty time.”³⁰ Of course, these pressures extend far beyond the financial. In every case, faculty members are called upon to contribute to solutions, for which they may have little or no professional experience. This is certainly an area in which professional development can be used to provide both context and a toolkit for the development of ideas. It can also be used to illuminate industry trends and best practices. In addition, higher education associations can be especially valuable to member institutions by providing professional development resources and opportunities.

The assumption behind this chapter is that academic freedom and a fair tenure (or long-term contract) system are fundamental to the professoriate and the academy. Arguably, shared governance requires it because it depends upon governors, particularly faculty and trustees, who are fundamentally free to do what is in the best interests of the institution. The importance of shared governance to the academic enterprise cannot be overemphasized; however, there is significant evidence that roles and responsibilities are still unclear. Based on a 2016 survey, the Association of Governing Boards notes that

only about 30 percent of presidents reported that the typical board member understands the work of the faculty well or very well,

and only about 20 percent said that the typical faculty member understands the work of the board well or very well. That is, presidents perceived board members to have greater awareness of faculty responsibilities than the reverse, although in neither case was the answer impressive. Perhaps more remarkable is the tepid degree to which presidents believed members of either group typically understand the work of the other.³¹

In some ways, this gulf of understanding is predictable. The corporate environment, from which most trustees hail, is substantially different from the academy in fundamental ways. Even the most progressive corporations rely upon hierarchical structures, with governing authority vested predominantly at the top. The structure and workings of the academy can seem baffling, convoluted, or pointless—as do many organizations to outsiders. Quite simply, trustees need active guidance to develop a nuanced understanding. This is a role for the chief academic officer and, to a lesser degree, the president. They are the bridge between academic affairs and the governing board. The process begins with new trustee orientation; however, that is just the beginning. To be effective, the guidance must be ongoing and deliberate. Academic leadership should not shrink from pointed questions, strong opinions, or difficult personalities but should be prepared to offer complete, concise, and understandable explanations. In a way, this is professional development for the board itself. Like other professional development, the institution should be deliberate about it.

As previously discussed, the challenges facing colleges and universities are most deeply rooted in the academic core. The teacher-student relationship can only be so efficient and still be effective. This conundrum stands at the heart of what we label academic affairs. It is the faculty and their leadership who bear the primary responsibility for both understanding this challenge and devising innovative and effective ways to improve quality while working within the confines of the institution's

circumstances. The future of higher education depends on it—a premise that should be central to the thoughts and actions of all constituents of the college or university. We are blessed with the fruits of centuries of this refinement. Liberal education’s incredible ability to develop critical thinkers, communicators, collaborators, leaders, and innovators is not a fluke. It is the distillation of effective teaching and learning practices and curriculum stretching back to antiquity. It is our precious inheritance, our charge, and our legacy.

Practically speaking, much of academic affairs is process and management of the day-to-day workings of the college. It is teaching classes, running a library, managing laboratories, staffing a learning center, and so on. However, it is also an active engagement in the challenges and opportunities that present themselves along the way. This is where creativity and innovation meet management and process. It is where the future of higher education is born. As practitioners, we bear responsibility for both. As academics and scholars, it is creativity and innovation that excites us and allows us to advance toward the pedagogical horizon.

Student Life

Colleges and universities come in all different shapes and sizes, with different missions, strategies, and approaches that shape how their students relate to them. But for most of them, if enrollment is code for revenue, then student life in turn is code for retention.

Student life is at the center of the educational enterprise and not a peripheral addition. The best colleges and universities differentiate themselves by defining their core academic mission and the programs that support it. Applicants appreciate that the best colleges have strong programs, but they also listen to the cumulative equivalent of the “word on the street.” They understand that the University of Rochester has the renowned Eastman School of Music and that Williams College has an outstanding economics department. Many also see value to the breadth of academic programming, looking to training in the liberal arts to equip them to articulate, write, apply quantitative methods, use technology, and work in a collaborative setting. Most students and their families understand that employers will look first to hire engineers who do not require remedial assistance in basic

writing and speaking skills for their entry level hires.¹ Perceptions of quality affect choice.²

If we separate out the various educational strategies that increasingly use technology-backed education and new pedagogical approaches, the quality of student life still influences the perceptions of the overall educational program for most students. There are a thousand teachable moments on a college campus, and only some of them occur in the classroom. It is student life that often shapes basic perceptions about a college community, aided by numerous ratings guides and ongoing campus and folk traditions spread and passed down by applicant pools and alumni perceptions. Observers tag colleges as “jock” or “Greek” schools (or both), drug friendly, hard drinking, Christian, liberal or conservative, and social-justice oriented, to name a few.³ But the facts are that the climate created by student life carries with it powerful impressions of what the college or university values, and what a college values translates into who self-selects into its applicant pool.

One of the most surprising features of a college campus is that student life often takes a back seat to the academic program. There are outlets for some aspects of student life—like athletics—that link student, alumni, parents, and other key stakeholders’ support for an institution. But student life is also a collection of fiefdoms jealously guarded through ongoing turf battles, with little sense of common purpose or direction. Fights take place over territory that can be programmatic and facilities-based, over how time and resources are allocated, and over where a particular program or initiative stands in the pecking order. Adding to the confusion, student life is the area in which students have the most influence and authority on campus. At most colleges, students control a separate student activities budget sizeable enough to influence the direction, tactics, and perceptions of student life.⁴

Student life is also where colleges and universities can run up against media perceptions. While aspects of academic programs

and course offerings might come under the scrutiny of print and social media, the politics of student life can be a very messy business. A student's relationship to the academic program is always personal and linked carefully to established protocols, which institutional referees—for example, deans—mediate. But student organizations, including media, political, and social groups, can create “news.” Unfortunately, this news sometimes dominates a college's agenda, can involve other stakeholders—faculty, staff, or trustees—and can pit various groups against one another. Presidents spend a disproportionate amount of their time working with other administrative staff and faculty to define and mediate campus issues. The recent rise of campus protests over internal matters illustrates this point.⁵

Student life raises interesting questions: Does the college exist to support the faculty in their quest for knowledge and growth as teacher scholars? Or is its purpose to serve the students who came there to learn? Either answer offers a compelling case for the need to support higher education. But in the end key stakeholders, especially trustees, the administration, the faculty, and the staff must appreciate and account for a student's perspective. Students live on campus. The dining hall is their kitchen. The student center is their living room. Their residence halls provide sleeping accommodations and socialization options. Libraries, wellness centers, and common green spaces offer additional facilities to form a sense of community. Put in other terms, the intersection of academic and social life determines a comfort level that had a deep impact on overall student retention.⁶

It's easy to judge a student-friendly campus. Is there a plan in place for one-stop shopping to answer academic questions? Is the financial aid and business office integrated so that a student can get easy and reliable answers about tuition, grants, loans, and work study—opportunities to remove financial impediments to attendance? Is the food good, or does the college treat food as an auxiliary enterprise from which they can make up a loss in tuition dollars heavily discounted by financial aid?⁷ What are the

library and the athletic center hours of operation? Are there active campus counseling, health and wellness, and intramural programs to meet student needs? What is the level of overall maintenance, and does the campus look as if it has a handle on deferred maintenance? Optics matter.

An applicant can sense a student-centered campus by listening carefully from the first engagement. You know it best when you feel it. There is something quite real about curb appeal that extends beyond the physical look of the campus. Are the student guides well informed and knowledgeable moving past their role as cheerleaders to find tangible reasons to be excited about life on the campus? Do these guides understand both the anchor academic programs and the importance of the student life surround that will weigh heavily in an applicant's decision? Is the tour an accurate reflection of the perception that an applicant carries into the site visit? Is the tour itself arranged to accommodate the work and school schedules of prospective applicants, including Sunday and holiday visits? What is the level of follow-up by enrollment staff after the visit?

Let's assume that the people and program elements of a site visit score high. So much of student life is actually about the environment that surrounds the student outside the classroom. For many colleges, housing facilities are fully depreciated cash cows that directly address the bottom line ability of a college to balance the books. The residence halls—many of them converted dormitories with programming that seems drawn from the 1950s rather than the twenty-first century—lack the electrical capacity, HVAC systems, bathrooms, premium cable, and until recently, reliable internet service to meet the often single-bedroom, private-bathroom accommodations of their parents' homes. To offset this dilemma, a college has three choices. It can continue to run "refreshed" but antiquated residence complexes, retaining the cash to balance the books; it can invest in new facilities, employing its remaining debt capacity to improved housing at the expense of core academic facilities; or it

can look for strategic partnerships to build and manage student housing.

Given the competing claims on college revenue, these are critical decisions to make. While we argue for a robust student life program to complement quality academics, the cost of maintaining a growing, service-rich student life program has reached the tipping point. If a college defines its sense of self as student-centered, then the decision to participate in the consumer wars that govern the much-touted “rock-climbing” wall examples that predominate on many campuses has a downside.⁸ It’s hard to explain to families, state and federal officials, and the rating agencies why such expenditures will guarantee future classes based on amenities that do not seem central to the academic program. It’s not enough to say that such amenities attract bright students or at least students who can pay the full cost of attendance. Most will ask, What does a rock wall have to do with quality academics, delivered at reasonable cost and in a timely manner?

The problem is perhaps deeper than we imagine. On most campuses, student life is not as great a priority as it should be, given its importance to retention. If a student withdraws, it is likely that the reason will be more social than academic, often a problem of “fit.” For college administrators, therefore, the issue is how to balance the need to integrate the components of what Thomas Jefferson defined as an “academical village.”⁹ It must begin with a commitment to professionalize the student life program, attacking the problems in student life as central to improving the metrics that colleges and universities will be forced to report in new, tighter regulatory environments. Good student life programs nurture and sustain a sense of campus community from “cradle through career,” from first experiences as a freshman through a long alumni association with the institution. At the heart of these improvements must also come a commitment to support the professional staff managing student life.

Among the professional staff working with students, student life administrators often receive the least respect. They are seen

as more junior and clearly unequal in importance or impact to their faculty colleagues. In truth, it's more a question of the different responsibilities they shoulder on a college campus. The faculty is justified in believing that their work is the heart of the educational enterprise, but they must also appreciate that academics work within a broader residential setting. The health and vitality of a college campus is often the responsibility of front-line staff from student life, who work through the familial, relational, cultural, psychological, and social problems facing students on a campus. Put in other terms, the best-practice campuses are those that understand and plan for the integration of academic and residential life. Mr. Jefferson was right.

How does a campus plan, then, for an integrated approach to a student's experience on campus? It begins with the mission, values, and governing principles that define the strategy employed and the tactics used to implement the strategy. What follows next must be an effort to sell a broader integrated vision for how education is accomplished, including the role that student life programs play. No one teachable moment, whether inside the classroom or on the playing fields or in the campus center, is more or less important than the other. It's how these moments are tied together, based upon a clear assessment of how they fit into campus culture, that determines the priorities among student programs. It is a curse of many student life strategies that the tactics often build upon incremental efforts to create more programs rather than establish metrics concerning what students actually need on campus.

To start, American colleges and universities must provide better direction for student life programming. The efforts to ramp up this programming are noble and related directly to administrative and faculty efforts to improve retention. But the incremental increases to extend current programming and offer new incentives to bring students into the campus community are also responsible for some of the administrative bloat for which American higher education is increasingly criticized.¹⁰ If a college's

budget is a pie that has limited opportunities to expand because tuition, fee, and room and board increases are likely to be muted going forward, then the continuing increase in offerings and the rising costs associated with better programming to build retention will likely spark tensions within the campus community. This will include faculty and other staff who see resources, including salary increases, constrained as the pie's resources shift to improving student life programs.

How can America's higher education institutions improve retention through better student life programming? The answer begins by saying no. In an era of limited revenue, colleges and universities must establish clear priorities for student life. These principles guiding student life must be tied to the college's mission; value proposition, which states clearly what the college offers to students; and sense of self. They must be measured and assessed regularly, and they must link both to what the college is and what it wishes to become. Student life programming directly impacts retention, and a college must therefore consider how good programming can increase student comfort with and satisfaction in campus life while also improving the bottom line on retention. Student life programming is a living, dynamic, and breathing experiment in how best to meet student needs, improve support for the academic program, and restore the revenue base that makes it possible for the college to operate each year. As ever, it's how a college links the pieces of a puzzle—the complexity of operating like a small city on intertwined political, cultural, social, and economic levels—that ultimately determines who will be the winners and losers in American higher education in the twenty-first century.

To shape the student life program, the college or university must first look at the factors, often drawn from the academic program or other administrative divisions, that shape the need for a robust student life. It must also account for the norms established by American higher education, especially at institutions of similar size, type, and quality, that represent a bottom

line in programming. It must interpret consumer demands and anticipate trends in programming that are likely to occur over the long term. To this end, students should be offered a variety of social, cultural, and athletic programs, a rich array of speakers drawn from beyond the campus, off-campus opportunities for expanded academic and social programming, and a standard array of high-quality, well-resourced academic, social, career, and wellness and psychological options. In doing so, the college must operate on the principle that it can do anything that it must do but not everything that it wants to do.

It begins with the location. Student life on a rural campus means something quite distinct from the kind of student life experiences student enjoy on a large urban campus like Northeastern, George Washington University, or UCLA. The student life mix on a rural campus arises from a complex intermingling of a wide variety of campus-based options to create a more organic buy-in across student activities to offset the “nothing to do” syndrome that can negatively affect retention. Student life programming must mirror a creative use of venues, support for athletic programming, and a student life staff that may seem at times less like house mothers and more like cruise ship directors. This approach to program development must also account for the historic and built-in compromises reached over the long term, especially in schools with strong Greek and “jock” cultures played out in these rural settings.¹¹ It doesn’t work if Greeks perceive a new student center, for example, as a calculated and carefully designed social hearth bringing students together to lessen their interest in fraternity life. Changes in student life programming must be systemic, transparent, orderly, and broadly communicated if they are to work.

On urban and many suburban campuses, the factors affecting student life come together in a different way. The options are more numerous, and the city often becomes a selling point to potential applicants. The emphases also shift according to such factors as campus safety, housing policies, room and board plans,

and cross-registration strategies. Issues like access to convenient public transportation and the quality and availability of off-campus housing rise closer to the top of key student concerns.¹² Town/gown relations can also take on broader policy meaning. In Boston, for example, Mayor Marty Walsh has called for the construction of additional space to house up to 18,500 students by 2030, largely pulling students away from popular neighborhoods like Brighton and Allston, freeing up some five thousand units for the market. In an effort to maintain a greater economic balance in Boston, the City appears not to grasp the impact on college operating budgets and their debt capacity to meet non-academic institutional needs as colleges and universities pay to construct and maintain these new facilities.¹³

How the enrollment office sets the rules to shape how it “brings in the class” has enormous influence on student life programming and speaks directly to the relationship between the strategic plan, enrollment admission goals, and the retention program. It is critical to know what the historic building blocks are upon which enrollment targets are set. At small private colleges, for example, the presence of certain sports on the athletic roster, such as football, can directly affect the gender balance on a campus because of the size of the teams that they field. It also sets the tone for other campus programming, often increasing support for certain types of student life programs, like Greek life. If enrollment officials have a deep commitment and apply resources to increasing diversity on campus, the effect may be the same, but the student life programs must adjust to changing enrollment outcomes. Where enrollment heads, student life will follow.

In some college strategic plans, diversity drives many of the student life decisions. Most colleges want their admission class to look like the rest of America. Many of them are also concerned about the impact that shifting demographics can have on their ability to recruit successfully.¹⁴ Yet diversity carries with it very real costs that must be weighed against the full range of potential drawdowns on a college’s operating budget. For majority white

campuses whose stakeholders seek to increase diversity, the role that student life plays takes on special importance. Diversity requires full commitment from the campus community. With this commitment must come new, varied, and expanded programs to create a sense of accommodation within the campus community that goes well beyond federally prescribed commitments to Title VI and Title IX.¹⁵

Perhaps more than any other aspect of a strategic plan, diversity requires a broad, ongoing education among all stakeholders, beginning with trustees. The solution to bringing more Asian students into the engineering program is not simply better recruiting at Palo Alto High. It's not enough to establish good recruiting records with urban high schools with large African American populations if a safety net is not in place to make the transition to college life easier for black applicants. On most college campuses, diversity is a commitment to inclusion—but it also represents change. Although college campuses may welcome improving diversity as an intellectual exercise, they are also places of cultural inertia, which favor at most incremental change. Good diversity plans must be both cerebral and practical, establishing financial targets to determine both the level of resources that can be committed and how a college can create metrics to determine whether good intentions work.¹⁶

One additional concern is the increasing gender imbalance that exists on many college campuses as the percentage of college-bound women increases while the same percentage of men falls.¹⁷ The social consequences of “no one to date” can affect the freshman-to-sophomore, female-to-male, and non-athletic retention rates on many campuses. There are also corresponding impacts among colleges and universities that begin to admit larger numbers of non-traditional-age, graduate, and professional-degree students, who shift the mix in classrooms and labs, call for adjusted course offerings and times at which some classes are scheduled, and enter with different expectations for outcomes. As the age categories broaden on college campuses,

the need for different types of programming and support services becomes clearer.

One obvious example is transfer students. A number of colleges in the United States do a wonderful job of integrating their transfer students into the general student body.¹⁸ But at many colleges, transfers are the “fillers,” brought in to make certain that admissions targets are met, permitting the books to balance. Transfer students need a different type of safety net: they need individualized counseling and rely heavily on student services like career counseling and alumni networks. They are loyal alumni, but they have a different perspective and often a greater level of maturity and seasoning than other students. Transfer students who participated in the College Transfer Initiative through the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation’s support graduated at rates equal to or better than the general student groups against which they were compared.¹⁹ But few institutions today seem to recognize that transfer students can become critical building blocks, joining student athletes, legacies, program directed, and traditional “over the transom” students to create a robust admission class. There is a continuing chasm between how classes are formed and how student life staff prepares for and integrates the changing demographics that they face.

In a sense, student life programming is the most important part of the social contract that exists between a college and the students who attend it. The terms of the contract can vary as widely as the institutions themselves, but the linkage between academic programming and the student life experiences that surround academics constitutes a social contract. Students are expected to abide by its directives. Most colleges and universities have carefully designed protocols and procedures in place to define the contract. In fact, it’s often when colleges and universities overregulate in an attempt to enforce their social contracts with their students that tensions arise.²⁰

A good example is the continuing battle over Greek life. Depending upon broader norms in American culture, there is

always some ebb and flow to how dynamic Greek life is on American college campuses. Participation dropped off dramatically in the turbulent Vietnam era.²¹ But Greek life—with a long and storied history—continues to be important on many college campuses, especially in formerly male institutions, on rural campuses, and where Greeks have become intertwined with the history of the institution and in the minds of many steadfast alumni.²² There is also a corresponding reaction to Greek communities, notably among small private elite colleges in the Northeast, played out since the first “bans” on fraternities occurred in the 1960s.²³ The battle over Greek life also emphasizes a deeper discussion about how student life plays out on many college campuses.

In the future, a campus may decide to end traditional Greek life as part of a broader effort to reorganize its residential learning experience. But at a number of colleges and universities, the Greeks will still have a strong voice about the residential life on their campuses. Many Greek communities have also redirected public perceptions by stressing the leadership, business training, time-management skills, and service opportunities that are part of their Greek experience. A number of other chapters reinforce their philanthropic pursuits, although this approach is sometimes more a response to pressures challenging the exclusivity and contributions made by Greeks to the larger community.²⁴ The inability of Greek chapters to find insurance companies to work with them may also diminish their capacity to function effectively over the long term. But it may be better to integrate Greek life more fully into a student life program than face the backlash from students, trustees, alumni, and some staff about how the Greeks inhibit inclusiveness in a campus community. This is one of those issues that requires a better justification for how Greeks relate to the implied social contract between students and their campus community.

Within the social contract, however, colleges and universities have some options to maneuver, if only because they can shape

how they manage their resources. Most new college presidents look at food services, for example, soon after they arrive to take over their new duties on campus. The quality of the food at Bowdoin College is well known and helps to create a reputation for the college as a place where students eat well, thus enhancing its appeal to prospective students.²⁵ Some presidents often see food service as an opportunity to improve key student services through long-term increases in student board charges, made to offset these improvement costs. Many other presidents reason that it's better to satisfy the stomachs of their students first before attempting to win their hearts and minds. Additionally, food service realignment also permits an institution to adjust its student life programs to the changing demographics reflected in each admission class. If the goal is to appeal to a wider demographic, it is essential that the food service options reflect food that mimics the tastes of this new demographic, including an array of ethnic and religious preferences that may be incorporated into food service programs.²⁶

How a college handles food service also demonstrates the need to measure intent and outcomes in student life programs. The fundamental question is, what business should a college or university be in to meet the social contract with its students? As noted earlier, colleges and universities are small, complex cities with competing interests shaped by a diverse group of stakeholders. To meet competing claims, is it necessary for a college to be in the food industry, for which it has no expertise and against which it cannot compete with industry giants who shape pricing and identify and manage trends? Extending this analysis, should colleges grow an in-house facilities staff, police department, or back office operations that could be outsourced or better managed through a consortium of similar institutions to create efficiencies and economies of scale? If the compensation packages of affected employees can be made whole, is there an irretrievable loss of community if the result is more efficient, professional, and service-oriented programs? This is often where a

college community's "sense of self" conflicts with its business model. There are no easy answers, and the solution is idiosyncratic to a particular setting.²⁷

Like everything else on a college campus, however, sound student life policy ultimately emerges from good strategy based on some combination of people, programs, and facilities design. If program prioritization can help determine both the level of staffing and the type and support for student life programs that define campus culture, the role that facilities play is the missing piece of the puzzle. If, as we argue throughout this book, college and universities are operating on an unsustainable financial model, then changing how we think about facilities as a college asset provides an unprecedented opportunity to change the balance sheet in a dramatic and sustainable way. Colleges and universities have fallen into a dangerous trap by permitting their student service facilities—athletic complexes, theaters, museums, and especially student housing complexes—to eat up too much of their remaining debt capacity. On many campuses, these facilities are among the most dilapidated buildings on campus, fully depreciated, and at the end of their useful lives. If a college or university builds its reputation on a well-integrated, comprehensive residential learning experience without reimagining how its real estate assets could improve the financial bottom line, the result is at best a competitive disadvantage with peers and aspirant institutions with whom they directly compete.²⁸

The solution begins with the campus master plan, and more especially with the ability of campus administrators to link a college's mission, vision, and strategic direction to its campus master facilities plan. At best-practice campuses, the master facilities plan is the physical, tangible representation of a campus community's commitment to its values. The best campus master plans are much more than planning documents designed to provide order from often decades of haphazard, chaotic, and competing building practices. If not, they are simply a restatement of the older, antiquated position of a college as

an isolated “city upon a hill,” from which many of the tensions in town/gown relations, including challenges to the college’s tax-exempt status, emerge. A good master plan is actually a community plan, illuminating how a college intends to act in its neighborhood, town, and region. It is a discussion about physical assets and how they will be maintained, shared, created, and improved over the long term. A master facilities plan deals with not only how and why to create new athletic fields but also whether they are shared community resources linked to other examples of sound community planning.²⁹

In campus master planning, student life’s physical assets can be divided into two categories. The first are the obvious community assets—theaters, museums, athletic facilities, business incubators. They exist to support the academic program, but the best resourced of these facilities also garner substantial support from the community. They are classic community assets. The faculty perspective is that such facilities exist to support faculty-student teaching and interaction, which may preclude extensive community use. It may be that there are times in a college calendar when these facilities are much more heavily used for on-campus academic programming. But if a college can work out an amicable schedule and operate on a twelve-month calendar, community groups can use these facilities much more often. A better understanding that there is a symbiotic relationship between teachers, students, and their audiences can produce changes that open the college gates more widely to the neighborhood—demonstrating, as well, tangible community service, which can offset potential challenges to the tax-exempt status of a college or university.

These facilities also lend themselves naturally to public/private partnerships. They form the anchors for the larger revitalization of the communities and regions in which they are located. In many public/private variations of these developments, the employment increases and taxes generated qualify these facilities for substantial private investment and a range of tax benefits, including historic and new market tax credits,

depending upon the location and designations for the area.³⁰ The variation in how these student life facilities packages are put together are enormous. In athletic programming, the arrangement worked out between the College of the Holy Cross and the City of Worcester, which fields a minor league professional baseball team, provides a good example.³¹ More broadly developed commercial mixed-use resources, often blending some form of tax-exempt financing with private investment, are almost too numerous to mention.³²

The second category of assets is student housing. Student housing consumes a substantial portion of the total debt capacity of many colleges and universities, depending upon the size and commitment to a residential campus. This is often where the pressures of consumer competitiveness play an especially negative role. Student housing policy shapes the need for housing, and these policies vary widely across the country. Some institutions that characterize themselves as residential do not have an on-campus residency requirement. Others may require four years and provide 100 percent of the housing needed. Many institutions take a position somewhere in the middle, requiring housing for the first two years on campus but allowing upper division students to move off campus before they complete their degree. It can make for confusing student programming and disciplinary protocol as the residency changes with each semester. Further, student life policies have a tremendous impact on a college's operating budget, capital budget, and debt repayments.

Once again, it comes down to the question of whether a college has the budgetary discipline to establish clear policy priorities with a funding plan to back them up. Student housing raises an important policy question for America's colleges and universities on at least three levels. First, can colleges and universities that are labor and land intensive by tradition and design continue to support the footprint that they now maintain? Second, is it unreasonable to expect that student housing will attract

philanthropists on a scale large enough to raise the money necessary to build, equip, and endow new student housing? And finally, like food service, should American colleges really be in the hotel business, which is an auxiliary enterprise for which others have more expertise and which they could run more effectively and efficiently?

Campus critics will argue that colleges and universities must continue to operate their physical plant, including student housing. They will make additional arguments about the quality of the construction and the ability of developers to understand the campus community. They will say that looking to outside development violates the campus-wide operating principle "We've always done it this way." They note additionally that the college can use its tax-exempt capacity to maintain control. In a climate of campus inertia, the presumed need to control territory like student housing can be a daunting obstacle to overcome. It's better to pretend that fund-raising will cover the costs to build and endow these facilities or that debt should be diverted from academic facilities to student housing because donors might fund academic buildings. It's an especially difficult argument to make with trustees, who sense the qualms of mid-level facilities staff and share their concern about change that might lead to a perceived loss of institutional control.

Or so it would seem. But the plain, cold facts are that most colleges and universities cannot afford their physical plants and have become too reliant on them as cash cows. Many are still standing well beyond their expected usefulness. The greatest danger is, of course, that student housing is a daunting, ongoing challenge, either because replacement costs are astronomical or because their subsidizing the academic program puts the whole enterprise at risk. In addition, the failure to develop a coordinated, well-articulated program of how student and academic programs should relate to each other only compounds the problem. Higher education institutions have lawyers and accountants who can work with student life staff to guarantee

the intent and quality of the student life programs. Put another way, does a college really need to own a building to offer the student life program within it? Why, then, use precious debt capacity to maintain an unsustainable financial model that does not support the vitality of a college over the long term?

Student life programs must have purpose and direction. If the college advertises itself as a residential living experience, there must be a plan in place to bring the people, programs, and facilities into harmony with the institutional strategy. At most colleges and universities, there is an implied understanding of this need, but it is seldom stated clearly as policy. This is partly to provide flexibility should the administration need to draw more revenue from room and board rates as they nudge these rates upward. Still, the goal of student life is first to teach students to live together. As freshman and sophomores, this approach dictates communal living in traditional facilities that can be corridor-style or suite arrangements, depending upon the housing stock and campus preferences that built out the original housing facilities plan. As students move through the middle years, the college should offer more options to students, introducing them to choice and a broader array of semi-independent living. Affinity housing offers residence facilities to reflect programs that identify and support common interests among the students who reside in them. By senior year, community priorities shift to independent living as student life programming prepares students to move into the workforce.

Housing should be clean, spacious, wired, and technologically equipped to meet and anticipate student needs. But none of the housing stock should qualify as “Taj Mahal” living, no matter what peer and aspirant schools construct by comparison. Student housing is often an ugly intersection where efforts to attract and retain existing or new types of students—often international or full-pay—augment growing consumer wars over an array of country club amenities that are excessive.³³ The housing may also reflect efforts to refine student housing

policies on off-campus living or be an attempt by administrators to recapture the off-campus market of upper division students living independently. It's a "rock wall gone wild" mindset. And worst of all, Taj Mahal dorms are typically built from debt, with the assumption that students attracted to them will finance this debt through their board fees, often adjusted upward to reflect differentiated quality in the available stock of student housing.³⁴ The problem is that much of this debt shows historically on the college's books. The rating agencies assume that these housing facilities do not translate easily into repurposed uses, depending upon location and other factors, and that they are part of the college's residential living and learning housing plan. It's a no-win situation, one that seems to be almost too good to be true at first, as colleges build new facilities, but one that often impairs the financial and operational flexibility of a college going forward.

So much of what shapes student life colors perceptions of the academic program. Is it possible to be rated as a good place academically if a college or university places high nationally on the list of "best small college beer drinking schools," "uses hard liquor," "uses drugs," or has a negative stereotypical rating on "Greek life?"³⁵ There are two points to consider. First, learning takes place on a college campus both inside and outside the classroom. Second, student life administrators have enormous influence on how students relate to the academic program, how resources are allocated on campus, and what perceptions of an institution exist in the broader world. For a college or university to succeed, there must be much more rigorous efforts to involve the faculty directly in key aspects of student life policy, particularly as student life policy relates to the academic program. It's not so much a way to take the fun out of college life as an effort to restate the educational program as the heart of a dynamic campus.

College administrators must have an iron will to shape student life. The program offered historically is a product of

incremental policies that are both good faith efforts to provide a responsive student life program and turf war attempts to preserve budgets. Student life is also where the students play their most active role on a campus and typically control a separate budget for student activities. Student life can quickly become more about the process and ceremony attached to campus life than a well-developed and clearly articulated plan on how to organize it. There is a showmanship quality to student programming that goes well beyond policy. Student life is where retention works or fails. It's important to keep students involved and content. It is also critical to give them freedom within carefully prescribed limits. In this sense, the job description for student life staff is part policeman, cheerleader, mentor, and parent. The danger is that the orientations, celebrations, campus rituals, and athletic events may take precedence over how the campus community shapes student life. In the end, it's about integrating students into the academic program to foster greater retention.

For students, there are two anchors to their college life. The first is the academic program, which determines what they know, how they approach lifelong education, and what outcomes might occur. The second is the residential learning experience, which envelops the academic program. The best student life programs are based on a clear connection to mission and values. They are linked to the historic grounding of the value system, a pragmatic sense of where the college is, and a steadfast march to where it hopes to be. There cannot be incremental additions to a budget governed by campus cultural inertia that values only incremental change. Student life must be a sharp, differentiated program constantly under review, with established metrics based on priorities that support the academic program. The alternative is a reactionary mass of undifferentiated programs and offerings that shape a campus culture in conflicting ways.

The battles will continue, for example, over the role that athletics, Greek life, and politics should play on a university

campus. These are healthy debates, depending upon how campus cultures develop. But they also rip the bandage off self-inflicted wounds that can be caused by the wrong kinds of trustee, faculty, and staff intervention on specific issues without a clear sense of how the dots connect. They can illuminate power struggles over resources, time management, and recognition that spill over into board, faculty, alumni, parents, staff, and student politics. They compromise clear direction. The influence of athletics in student life programming provides an excellent example. Once a sport is established it is extremely difficult to end it, for instance, at the risk of strong student, parent, alumni, and donor backlash.³⁶ Most student life programs have built-in constituencies that will be called to action if its supporters perceive an administrative threat to it, no matter how reasoned the argument for the change might be.

In the end, there is a common thread to best-practice efforts to improve student life that goes deeper than innovative strategy, well-designed programs that support and enhance academic programs, and clear priorities about how to live out the core mission and values of an institution. The common thread is that the focus must be squarely on the students. Student life programs must be relatable and reasonable to build deeper connections between students and their colleges. These programs must meet and anticipate the needs of the students who use them. These needs vary dramatically across campuses where different sets of demographics, teaching approaches, and support services exist. Not all colleges and universities have the same need for or level of commitment to residential learning experiences. Yet the unifying thread is that the academic program cannot exist in a vacuum. There must be programming outside the classroom that supports the educational enterprise, however it develops. The best way to measure the success of student life is to look long term at an institution's retention numbers.

Retention is best metric by which to measure how students feel about their institutions. It's not likely that every college will

have a uniformly high rate of retention because colleges attract students with different profiles, levels of readiness, and expectations. But applicants can get a sense of how they might fare by asking if the academic and student life programs in place meet their needs. A college with a lower retention rate can be right for some students because it is an institution that focuses on first-generation or nontraditional college students, emphasizing outreach, mentorship, and aggressive career placement. The students who attend may not have the advantages of graduates of the leading private and public secondary institutions, but the institution may work well for these students if it provides access to a college education that includes the right counseling. Students have emotional, psychological, social, and cultural needs beyond financial concerns that affect retention. It is up to student life to forge an institutional bond that allows students to settle into their education while fitting into their environment.

Athletics

Sports have always been an important part of cultural life. For the early groups of hunters and gatherers, sports taught important skills and the value of teamwork. One essential component was to develop and illustrate male prowess. Early literary evidence about sports appears in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, in which Homer extensively describes ancient Greek aristocrats competing in sport contests.¹ In ancient Greek sports, athletic prowess was a sign of masculine achievement: “Greek female sport never had the societal importance that was accorded to male sport. It is, nonetheless, eminently worthy of study, not least because of its relevance to gender issues and ethnic discourse. Public, nude, and often violent, male athletics (i.e., high-level, public competitions for prizes) were applauded as a marker of Greek masculine excellence, but—except in Sparta—motherhood and the family home largely circumscribed the social role of females.”²

In the United States, athletics enjoys a rich and evolving history that draws from the individualistic traditions of the Greeks, which promoted courage and endurance; the state-sponsored traditions of ancient Roman sporting events; and the traditions

of the British, which emphasized team play and sportsmanship. The object of these traditions was to develop a sense of group loyalty, honor, and rule-abidingness. As Americans fused these historical traditions, a unique ethos developed in American college sports. David Brooks noted in the *New York Times* that in college sports, A. Bartlett Giamatti, former baseball commissioner and president of Yale University, perceptively surmised that Americans behave like the British but think like the Greeks.³

Intercollegiate sports began in the United States in 1852, when crews from Harvard University and Yale University met in a rowing competition, although Yale opened a college boat club as early as 1843.⁴ Rowing dominated many of the early discussions about how colleges organized their sports. The first intercollegiate baseball game took place in 1859, between Amherst College and Williams College.⁵ By 1900, intercollegiate sports included baseball, rugby, and track and field.⁶ By the beginning of the twentieth century, the role of sports, largely unregulated, had become a major feature of collegiate life and a cause of some concern.

Soon a number of first-tier sports—notably football and basketball—emerged. As the need to adapt evolving sports became more urgent, Theodore Roosevelt convened two White House conferences in the early twentieth century to encourage reforms, specifically in football, to end the injuries and deaths that had caused a number of colleges to discontinue the sport. Roosevelt meant to address concerns and put basic forms of governance into place that would assure consistency, uniformity, and increased safety for athletes playing in a largely unregulated environment.⁷

On a national level today, organized athletics falls into two distinct categories. In the first category are the sports managed by one of the national governing bodies, including the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), and the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA). The NCAA traces its origins to Roosevelt's White House meetings, when Henry

MacCracken, president of New York University, called a meeting of thirteen colleges and universities to make changes in football practices. In December 1905, sixty-two higher education associations became charter members of the Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United States (IAAUS). The IAAUS changed its name to the NCAA in 1910.⁸

The second category includes the robust group of sports not governed by one of the national presiding groups described above: National Collegiate Boxing Association and the Intercollegiate Sailing Association, among others.⁹ This group also incorporates all intramural programs and clubs that are available to the general student body on any campus that offers them. Colleges support intercollegiate intramural programs in different ways, depending in part upon how they value the role that athletics and competition plays in their student life program. Maintaining club and nationally sanctioned sports can be an expensive commitment of personnel, programs, and facilities development and upkeep.

In 1921 the NCAA conducted its first national championship in track and field. By 1939, it included a national basketball championship. As growth in membership, programs, and championship competitions continued, the NCAA named its first executive director, Walter Byers, and published a national headquarters in Kansas City in the early 1950s. Shortly thereafter, the NCAA established control over live television games and established rules on postseason bowl games. By 1973, it had divided its membership into three competitive divisions: I, II, and III. Five years later it created subdivisions I-A and I-AA in football.¹⁰

The role of women in college sports became a point of significant legislative and judicial action in the second half of the twentieth century. Although the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was written to end discrimination based on sex, religion, race, color, or national origin restricted to the area of employment, it did not explicitly extend to gender discrimination.¹¹ The law made no explicit mention of sports. Only 1 percent of the athletic budgets

went to female sports on the college level in 1971 but the percentage devoted to female sports increased steadily. Since Title IX, there has been a 600 percent increase in the number of women playing college sports.¹² Historically, the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women governed women's collegiate sports with nearly a thousand member institutions.¹³ This created considerable conflict with the NCAA, but by 1982 all divisions of the NCAA offered national championships for women's athletics.¹⁴ In time, Title IX established a three-pronged test for colleges based on proportionality of women to men, evidence of expanding opportunities for women, and an ability to demonstrate that a college accommodated the interest and ability of women in sports programs.¹⁵

On college and university campuses today, sports remain popular with campus stakeholders. A university may sponsor twenty or more different sports in addition to intramural offerings. There are approximately 460,000 student athletes who participate in college-sanctioned sports each year.¹⁶ College sports are also an important source of revenue. The NCAA earned almost \$1 billion dollars in 2013.¹⁷ In 2010, the Southeastern Conference alone earned \$1 billion dollars, while in 2011 the University of Texas made \$133 million from its football program.¹⁸ In 2012, some fans paid more than \$600 to watch popular football games.¹⁹ Coaches in these big conference universities could be paid as much as \$10 million dollars in compensation annually.²⁰

Yet for all the revenue generated by the handful of large conferences, tuition increasingly subsidizes athletics on most campuses. Only one in eight of the 202 Division I colleges took in more revenue than they spent in athletics between 2005 and 2010. Significantly, the amount spent on an athlete can be six times more than the amount spent to educate the nonathlete. In 2010, the median amount per student at ninety-seven public institutions competing in the top-tier Football Bowl Subdivision was \$14,000, a fraction of the \$92,000 spent per athlete.²¹

Why have college sports become so important a part of campus culture? The reasons are in part a changing mix of historical, cultural, social, and economic factors. Most colleges began as men-only institutions at a time when society valued and trained male prowess in mind and body. Campus culture reflected the shared values of American society at large. Success in college sports also mirrored academic excellence. This success fit nicely into institutional aspirations, for example, and became one attractive avenue to regional and national recognition. The Ivy League is, actually, an athletic conference that has come to symbolize elitism and academic excellence. But, although its origins are obscure, the phrase “Ivy League” seems to have originated in the early 1950s, after the presidents formalized and codified athletic protocol.²²

Athletics also serves an important social role. For many high school athletes and their families, an athletic scholarship is an aspiration that often shapes a student’s high school experience, preparation, and training. For many of these parents, a Division I or II scholarship is a shared aspiration with their children not only because of the rank and prestige that it conveys but also because it makes a four-year college degree affordable. Many families see an athletic scholarship as a way to make up college savings they do not have or afford a college degree that their income makes impossible. Their hopes are further reinforced by the proliferation of big conference sports across cable systems, social and print media, and through the admiration and at times hero worship that Americans have for professional sports figures.

On college and university campuses, the value proposition that defines what athletics contributes to college life is also clear. Sports are a common denominator that links on-campus stakeholders to off-campus supporters. At the most basic level, sports are an important admissions building block to ensure a well-rounded admission class. On many Division III classes, athletics—with a football roster that might approach 120 students in a

1,000-student institution—can balance gender ratios as more women than men apply to small colleges, otherwise tipping the balance in favor of women. Applications from student-athletes often draw a different kind of student from those who apply over the transom, are part of legacy tradition, or transfer. These prospective student-athletes form a natural affinity network linked through their program to the college or university by their athletic participation and their relationship to their coaches and to one another.

College sports are also a glue that holds campus culture together, depending upon the strength of its athletic tradition. Athletics are a critical component of student life, in which on some campuses many students find affiliation, either in the established, club, or intramural programs. College sports are a source of pride and validation among students and others in the campus community. In fact, some of the fastest-growing sports are not the traditional college sports, but club sports, like bass fishing, competitive cheerleading, and rugby.²³ The expansion of athletics offerings often reflects efforts to provide a wider array of healthy options for students, especially in rural and suburban institutions in which off-campus options are more limited. They also provide options that do not require the time and travel commitments of varsity sports.

Collegiate sports may also be a source of frustration, especially among faculty, who see athletics as a drain upon available financial resources since athletic programs typically do not pay for themselves. Added to this frustration are the large indoor and outdoor facilities that must be constructed and maintained, often subsidized by institutional debt or student fees that would otherwise be available to support the academic program. Some staff and faculty see sports as taking precedence over the academic program, diverting the attention of members of the board of trustees, president and senior administrators, and students whose practice schedules may conflict with their academic pursuits. Opponents decry the “professionalization” of college

sports, especially at the Division I level, as separate facilities create classes of athletes separate from yet within the student body.

These opponents also point to a kind of cognitive dissonance between the ideals and practices of athletics on college campuses. They argue that sports promote unhealthy practices, particularly when linked to other predominantly male bastions, like Greek life. Opponents warn that promulgating a warrior culture on campus by institutional design contributes to excess, including substance abuse and crime, especially against women. Numerous well-publicized cases on American college campuses reinforce this view.²⁴ As a result, groups like the NCAA regularly publish statistical evidence—notably, student athlete graduation rates—that attempt to counter these views.²⁵

College sports also play a critical role in building alumni, community, and donor support. They typically bind more alumni to the school than any single academic program or student life initiative. Indeed, athletics outranks even Greek allegiances among alumni, especially at those institutions with strong, well-established, and nationally ranked athletic programs, because the base they draw upon includes all stakeholders who share an interest in a college. A graduate does not have to be a former athlete, for example, to become a lifelong fan and supporter of the college's sports program. Strategically, presidents and boards ignore college sports at their own peril, especially since many board members are former athletes, and alumni ties to athletic programs run deep. In public and internal battles between presidents and athletic coaches, the power of the athletic office can be significant.

College athletic directors and coaches in predominant sports have special, and often long-standing, relationships with donors, alumni, and sports-oriented faculty and staff. On some campuses, the power and influence of a coach or an athletic director with an agenda can eclipse the influence and authority of a president. Penn State provides just one example of what may

occur when bad things happen in a university's athletic program. The debate surrounding the Penn State debacle tore the university apart as factions within and without chose sides in the Sandusky scandals, which rocked and diminished the Paterno legacy.²⁶ What was lost in the tragedy was that Penn State is an outstanding research university, which contributes enormously to its region.²⁷ The lesson became one of how to balance the power of an athletic program as one piece of what a university does, how it markets itself, and what contributions it makes to society.²⁸

In the best campus settings, the success of an athletic program is not ultimately measured in wins and losses but in the contribution it makes to the mission of a college or university. The stakeholders' willingness to adhere to the mission drives the strategic direction of an institution and shapes how student life programs evolve. It is critical that the institutional mission closely parallel the principles that guide an athletic program. There must not be a separate fiefdom bolstered by inappropriate trustee or donor relationships with the athletic department, however well intentioned. If something goes bad, the buck will stop at the desk of the president. To this end, the athletic program must be fully integrated into the student life program, with the advocacy, success metrics, and regular lines of communication among stakeholders closely monitored to match broader institutional objectives. Trustees should keep their noses in, but hands out, of the athletic tent.

There are a number of ways that athletics can assume a broader and better-integrated role in institutional mission. It starts by making certain that athletics upholds a series of principles that reinforce the academic program. These principles go well beyond bureaucratic tactics like controlling when athletic departments schedule practices and "away" games. Athletics has a good deal to offer American students, as it did the ancient Greeks. Sports can teach critical life skills that are also integral to a liberal arts education, which forms the core learning

experience on most campuses. Rigorous sport programs demand discipline, focus, and the ability to work through complexity. They require a nimble mind and the ability to work as a team player in collaborative settings. In short, they teach sportsmanship. Much of what sports do to educate the “whole” individual corresponds to the best-articulated traditions of a liberal arts education. A successful athletics program must embody the values of the institution that supports it.

Athletics must also be integrated into the student life program. There is often a historic tension on campus between athletics and student life, with each group maintaining an arm’s-length distance. The senior administration must work diligently to subordinate athletics to student life, which itself must be better integrated into academic life. In a common educational enterprise, student life must be a seamless extension of what students learn, with the classroom and laboratory at the center of the learning experience. But athletics can contribute enormously by creating a dynamic that enriches student life by becoming a cornerstone of well-supported and consistently promoted student life programming. It works when the core values that govern athletics are drawn from student life and advocated by it.

One of the most damaging aspects of athletics, which typically do not pay for the programs, staff, and facilities that are needed to maintain a full complement of programs, is that the number of programs tends to increase as the years go by. There are a number of factors contributing to this problem. Some expansion emerges from the efforts of colleges and universities to meet federal requirements on Title IX. Title IX mandates that athletics programs reflect gender balance and equity, certainly a noble intention. But the impact is often to add additional women’s sports, often under the assumption that they will both satisfy federal Title IX requirements and add to the depth of the application pool. At some institutions, men’s sports are decommissioned, with some ending entirely or being converted to club sports, creating internal

controversies, divisions, and hard feelings among groups of key stakeholders.

A second issue is that donors can dramatically influence the direction of an athletic program. Supporting athletics is often a more enticing opportunity than putting a name on a residence hall or an academic building. This is especially true for those wealthy donors whose donations stipulate naming rights. Colleges across the country are littered with tennis pavilions and squash courts that they may not need and that may not be a priority, whether for their athletic program or for a college's strategic direction. Donors can also influence which programs get preference as they endow coaching salaries, new athletic facilities, and scholarship opportunities in Division II and III programs. Particularly troublesome relationships among athletics directors, coaches, and major donors can emerge that permit athletic department preferences to take precedence over other strategic initiatives at an institution. Trustees must make special efforts to assist the administration in developing regular and normal lines of communication within an established and respected chain of command.

Alumni can also cause special heartache, especially at institutions whose loyalties are more decentralized, for example, to Greek life or athletic programs rather than to the college or university. In this case, the problem does not originate in the athletic department but with a college that has failed to articulate college-wide values. There is tremendous danger to a college or university that identifies its sense of self predominantly through its athletic programs. While it can be attractive to some applicants, many others judge their attendance on the quality and reputation of the academic program. Employers will likely take a similar view. Put in other terms, an institution must always present a public face that demonstrates the value of the college in which athletics can play an important but never dominant role in its branding effort.

Colleges can also fail to recognize the full potential of athletics through the cultural inertia that exists on a campus. Typically, the number of sports supported by an institution can often exceed the capacity of a college to adequately support them. It is impossible for small and midsized colleges and universities to support much more than twenty sports without imagining the role that sports play in new and imaginative ways. There is a widely accepted belief across campuses that it is easy to add a sport to the roster but almost impossible to remove one without facing a tremendous backlash from students, student athletes, athletic staff, donors, and alumni. Of course, there are examples—Swarthmore ended its football program—but they are relatively scarce across American campuses.²⁹ Occasionally, institutions facing financial exigency will also make cuts in the number of athletic programs fielded.³⁰

College athletic programs are facing a number of changes that go well beyond the discussions about shifting conference affiliations, which take up much of the media's attention. To address the challenges faced by college sports programs, an institution must first take a long, hard look at the "all in" costs. Institutions that claim they can field more programs than their budget permits must be far more candid about the full range of expenses run up by the program. There are the obvious, easily identifiable lines, like coaching salaries, travel, athletic scholarships, and NCAA reporting costs. But imbedded in these expenses are the costs to build—and especially to maintain—the indoor and outdoor facilities that create a large footprint for the "jockplex." Included also are the health and training facilities, the club and intramural sports programs. It is wise to do the research to discover the "all in" number before making commitments to any athletics program.

The rationale for sports programs varies in large part by the scale, mission, and climate on each campus. For Division III, the primary role of athletics is to serve as an admission building block with the sociocultural importance of athletics on campus

determined by campus climate and traditions. In Division II and III programs, the role of the student athlete impacts but does not shape admissions as directly because the size of the institution dilutes the effect of student athletes on the incoming admission class. For these colleges and universities, other factors, notably alumni, donor, and student support, play a more significant role. In Division I, there's always a difference between the handful of elite conferences that benefit from the large, very lucrative cable and television contracts currently negotiated and the rest of Division I members. The elite conferences are a rarified world of privilege and problems, acting at times more like a farm league for professional sports than a collection of educational institutions leading with an academic mission.

Once the rationale has been established, a college must determine how its athletics program fits as a cornerstone of student life. There must be a careful balance between sponsored sports and club and intramural programs. Most colleges are developing a strong sense of wellness programming, which cuts across residence, dining, health, and student life activities. Further, the "all in" costs of sports must be reflected in the percentage of the budget devoted to financing the athletic program. This number should also be related to the full range of student life programs to determine the right mix of programs and the budgets that support them. Perhaps most important, campus stakeholders, especially trustees, must understand the financial and educational choices that they make when approving a college's budget.

To this end, it is time for America's colleges and universities to be more adroit at cutting the drawdown athletics makes on existing operating budgets. To do so will require a rethinking of the role of athletics, especially at the Division II and III levels. These colleges and universities use some combination of legacies, student athletes, "over the transom" applicants, and transfers to build their admission class. They are distinct from most Division I institutions, especially those that operate at elite

levels fed by high attendance, pervasive branding, and multiyear cable contracts. For these smaller institutions, the athletics program must become an extension of general admission recruiting efforts. In an era of increased transparency, it is essential for the athletics program to support recruiting by attracting students who can improve the discount rate for recruited students by lessening the negative impact that scattershot recruiting has upon the financial aid budget.

If athletics impacts a college admissions class, colleges must consider both the number of sports offered and their relative role in a prioritized pecking order. What are the dominant sports that reflect the history and traditions of the institution, engender the most alumni, staff, faculty, student, community, and donor support, and build into existing or new admission markets? The effort requires a fundamental change in the job description of a coach and the athletic staff to one in which winning remains important but is no longer the only end game. Instead, the athletic department must be better attuned to admission goals, using admission tactics to attract a range of qualified student athletes, one that meets broader institutional goals for the number of full-pay students, where practical, and for financial aid discount policies and practices. In this new paradigm, the coach becomes a different kind of admissions recruiter, recruiting the student as well as the athlete.

At Allegheny College Richard Creehan pioneered this strategy, which later moved with him to Washington & Jefferson College, Adrian College, and Alderson Broaddus University. As it has evolved, the strategy has moved beyond athletics to an “affinity mentoring” model, now being deployed at Emory & Henry College and Lyon College; what happens in athletics recruiting is transferable to a host of other affinity groups.³¹ In athletics, it begins with a matrix that establishes three tiers among sponsored sports programs. In each tier, the college provides more or less financial aid overall to support athletic recruitment efforts depending upon the sport and the recruit. Each coach is assigned

an admissions number and a financial aid target against which he or she is expected to recruit. Among these recruits, some percentage is expected to be full pay, brought in below the institutional discount rate, or at or above the discount rate. Individual sports are balanced against one another in each tier and in general to provide a uniform athletic admission profile, discount rate, and budget that complements and conforms to an overall admission strategy.

The affinity model presumes that the college has made suitable investments in facilities—again balanced against tiered programs—to be at or better than most athletic facilities in their conference. On some campuses, coaches may also keep a portion of the savings otherwise returned to the admission budget to improve staffing, travel, recruiting, or other uses. The affinity program also presumes that the college has an effective predictive financial aid model that works in tandem with general recruiting efforts. For the college or university, there are three principal positive effects with the program. First, the institution has a much deeper understanding of the true cost of athletics. Second, it allows the institution to differentiate programs within its sponsored sports to more fully align with alumni and donor support and conference priorities, among other stakeholders. And finally, the college effectively caps financial aid discounting using the affinity model by shaping admissions efforts. Athletics becomes an admissions building block that produces new revenue using the coaches as first-line recruiters.

The shelf life of an affinity model will depend on how well the model is integrated into the educational program. Done right it can stabilize and increase enrollment, improve retention and graduation rates, and improve net tuition revenue, effectively capping the size of financial aid discounts. The key is to link the affinity model more comprehensively, creating a lasting mentorship that links students to an aggressive mentoring program supported across the campus. In this iteration, students work with a strong and committed mentor who is responsible for

recruiting and retaining individual students. This mentorship includes both on-campus educational and student life experiences and a more aggressive effort to develop internships, externships, off-campus study, and college placement. The effect is both philosophical and practical. A prospective applicant chooses a college because the student identifies with the academic program or an affinity opportunity. Placement efforts improve employment opportunities at graduation to complete the cycle.

It is no longer enough to assume that colleges and universities build out their sports programs to meet institutional considerations like gender balance and alumni giving. For college sports to be successful, they must be fully integrated into the life of an institution. Athletics must be a cornerstone of the student life programs linked to a college's mission and sense of self. Athletics programs—whether sponsored, club, or intramural—must be accessible and build students' affinities for their institutions. In the end, athletics is a vital building block in enrollment; it can dramatically affect a college's bottom line in gender, alumni support, retention, and graduation and placement rates. If colleges are willing to rethink how they recruit student athletes, an athletic program can move from the expense to the revenue side of the ledger. The financial picture for most colleges and universities is bleak enough that reimagining the role of athletics as a stronger partner in meeting a college's strategic needs is an important and necessary step.

Collaboration and Technology

Collaboration lacks the heroic exceptionalism that serves as the foundation of so many organizational sagas. . . . Collaboration is neither a panacea nor a silver bullet, but it is the most underutilized resource in the liberal arts college toolbox,” notes Eugene Tobin of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.¹ Of course, the same could be said for community colleges and research universities. In a world of rankings and recognition, collaboration requires the participating institutions to subordinate their individual identities for the good of the collective. One need only watch a college football rivalry to understand how deep these institutional identities go. For example, Texas A&M University’s “Aggie War Hymn” has repeated disparagements of the University of Texas.² Aggie’s sing the song so vociferously that a sign in the old press box warned, “Welcome to Kyle Field. For those of you visiting for the first time, please do not be alarmed. The press box will move during the Aggie War Hymn.”³ Sentiments that can literally set reinforced concrete into motion are going to be a challenge to subordinate, even in the groves of academe.

Despite the challenges, collaboration is arguably one of the most effective ways for colleges and universities to realize significant efficiencies. This is especially true for smaller institutions. Small colleges and universities suffer tremendously from a lack of scale in their purchasing, operations, and facilities. From the library to the natatorium to Arabic studies, residential institutions are expected to provide a complete college experience. Since the majority of these institutions serve fewer than two thousand students, often in rural settings, the financial reality is that they spend substantially more per student than most large institutions. Collaboration has emerged as the single most powerful tool in addressing these inefficiencies. These collaborations exist on three scales: local, regional, and national.

One of the oldest and most respected examples of local collaboration is the Claremont University Consortium, founded in 1925. It was based on the vision of James A. Blaisdell, third president of Pomona College. In 1923, he wrote, “My own very deep hope is that instead of one great undifferentiated university, we might have a group of institutions divided into small colleges—somewhat on the Oxford type—around a library and other utilities which they would use in common. In this way I should hope to preserve the inestimable personal values of the small college while securing the facilities of the great university. Such a development would be a new and wonderful contribution to American education.”⁴ Today, the consortium includes five independent liberal arts colleges and two independent graduate institutions.⁵ Their adjacent campuses share many facilities, including the Claremont Colleges Library, which ranks third among private institutions in California, behind Stanford and USC, and “is clearly larger than any one of the schools could afford to own on its own.” The colleges share health and counseling services, campus security, human resources, telecommunications, risk management, real estate, and physical plant maintenance. Cross registration is popular, accounting for 16 percent of the courses taken, and provides a diversity of courses (exceeding 2,000) not found

at even the most elite small colleges and universities. The Claremont University Consortium serves more than 6,300 students and 700 faculty members.⁶

The Five Colleges Consortium, founded in 1965, includes four independent liberal arts colleges and the public University of Massachusetts Amherst. Three campuses are located in Amherst, while the other two are within a twenty-minute drive. They focus on shared use of libraries, cross registration, and open theater auditions across campuses, as well as the creation of joint academic departments and a common transportation network.⁷ The Five Colleges serve about 30,000 students and 2,200 faculty members. The governance of the consortium is a representative study in how these sorts of collaborations work. The consortium has an executive director who reports to the board of directors, comprising the four college presidents, the chancellor of the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and the president of the University of Massachusetts system.⁸ Operationally, the deans of the faculty, principal business officers, chief information officers, principal student affairs officers, and library directors of the five institutions meet regularly.⁹ These meetings are supplemented by various groups, the consortium notes: “At the present time, approximately eighty groups are engaged in cooperative planning with the support of Five College [Consortium] staff.”¹⁰ Clearly, coordination and planning must be deliberate and ongoing.

Regional collaboration typically springs from the concentration of a high number of institutions similar by type or purpose. Some of the oldest efforts to collaborate include groups such as the Associated Colleges of the Midwest, founded in 1958, comprising fourteen independent liberal arts colleges in five states, and the Great Lakes Colleges Association, founded in 1962, comprising thirteen independent liberal arts colleges in four states, whose leadership aims to promote liberal arts and the sciences through ongoing collaboration.¹¹ The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation has been a primary supporter of these associations and

other regional collaborations—and collaborations continue to be formed. In the past five years, the Northwest Five Consortium of five colleges in the Pacific Northwest and the New York Six Liberal Arts Consortium of six colleges were founded. The strategic plan of the Associated Colleges of the South, a sixteen-college consortium founded in 1991, is a good example of the work that these consortia do. Pedagogical strategies seek to “expand curricular offerings, and support faculty through cross-institutional collaboration . . . [by] explor(ing) more inter-campus classroom collaborations nurtured by technology . . . [and] develop(ing) a pilot to investigate the usefulness of virtual departments among some or all of the sixteen colleges.”¹² Financial strategies include: “Develop, gather, disseminate, and monitor best practices with regard to cost containment strategies . . . [by] initiat(ing) college finance training/workshops for new academic and administrative officers (director and above) and board members.”¹³

Pennsylvania provides an interesting example of regional collaborative efforts. In the eastern part of the state, the Southeast Pennsylvania Consortium for Higher Education brings together eight independent colleges, largely in suburban Philadelphia, that collaborate in academic programming, student access, faculty development, business operations, and community outreach through shared activities, services, technology, and information sharing.¹⁴ This group demonstrates the potential of scale: enrolling more than 18,000 students, it is the third largest higher-education provider in the Delaware Valley. In the Allentown area, the six colleges and universities of the Lehigh Valley Association of Independent Colleges collaborate in such disparate areas as academic calendars, cross registration, libraries, and admission counselor tours to the valley.¹⁵ In Pittsburgh, the ten colleges and universities constituting the Pittsburgh Council of Higher Education look at ways to collaborate or take common positions on behalf of 54,000 full-time, 24,000 part-time, and 20,000 noncredit students.¹⁶ Finally, smaller groups, like the Tri-College Consortium of Swarthmore, Haverford, and Bryn

Mawr and the Northeast Pennsylvania Education Consortium, complete the Pennsylvania mosaic.

Tim Alexander, the Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania's vice president for finance and administration, reflects on why there is a need to collaborate. He speculates that, "perhaps out of tradition or self-interest or maybe because it just made good common sense, the private colleges in Pennsylvania decided more than two decades ago to formally establish collaboration as one of the core missions of its trade association. From energy procurement, curtailment and conservation to software procurement and Internet connectivity—from regulatory compliance to employee and student services, AICUP enhances the common goal of strengthening its sector . . . collectively rather than what might occur one campus at a time."¹⁷ Historically, state independent college and university associations have represented the collective political interests of the colleges and universities that formed their membership. They have focused much of their effort on representing constituents in their respective statehouses, often dealing with issues that included taxes, the protection of the college's 501(c)(3) status, student financial aid, and regulations. Many of them also adopted an aggressive lobbying operation in Washington to complement the work of national educational organizations. Many of the public colleges and universities maintain counterparts. Driven by their boards, their scale, or the interests of their association presidents, a number of these regional associations have developed successful member service programs. The most sophisticated of these programs go beyond public affairs to public relations, research, and member resources of all sorts.

At the national scale, the Coalition on College Cost Savings (CCCS) is one of the most interesting and innovative projects being undertaken. Its purpose is to leverage the collective buying power of private colleges to reduce operating costs, improve the efficiency of internal procedures, and ultimately lower the cost of delivering education. CCCS currently comprises 30 higher

education member organizations in twenty-eight states and represents their 682 member colleges and universities.¹⁸ Vi Boyer, president of the Independent Colleges of Washington, notes that the CCCS's efforts are directed at looking for the best ideas and practices, rather than more narrowly looking first at where to save money. The bigger answers lead to transformative change and form new, sustainable business and financial models.¹⁹ Another interesting national collaboration is the Committee on Coherence at Scale for Higher Education. It was formed in 2012 to "ensure the programmatic, concerted, and efficient development of large-scale projects that, if built as coherent elements of an emerging digital environment, will significantly enhance scholarly productivity and enrich teaching."²⁰ The committee is made up of leadership from colleges, universities, and higher education associations. Its goal is to make national-scale collaborations more efficient and effective. Chuck Henry, committee founder and president of the Council on Library and Information Resources, concludes, "The future of higher education rests on the ability to reconceive ourselves holistically."²¹ This reconception is largely being driven by the changing landscape of costs and revenue in higher education.

National scale organizations, like the American Council on Education, the American Association of Colleges and Universities, the Council of Independent Colleges, and the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, all focus on engagement with and collaboration among their members. They certainly have important roles to play in tracking and disseminating best practices. They can also help bring critical mass to collaborations. However, efforts to increase efficiencies and create economies of scale must emerge from a clear, definitive statement within an institution's strategic plan. The consortial approach must grow organically, pass the test of what is reasonable and achievable, involve the faculty, and support the core academic program. Whatever steps are taken must be defined

by metrics that both measure success in tangible ways and inform future decisions.

Further, it is critical that institutions choose their partners wisely when collaborating. Any marriage of equals must be a good fit, one that honors the terms of the marriage contract. In addition, collaborators can come with varied backgrounds—college and universities, other nonprofits, for-profits, and other consortia—and may be local, regional, statewide, national, or global, depending upon the programs proposed. Finally, it is important to collaborate with eyes wide open. Collaboration that produces systemic change is not free and should be planned out within a college's budget, but it may well be the most efficient and politically adept way to strengthen participating colleges over the long term, by making changes in common that would not be possible to contemplate alone.

Technology brings a new dimension to collaboration; geography and locality are no longer the most important elements. The internet and World Wide Web have brought a degree of connectiveness that would have been unimaginable a generation ago. These technologies have quickly become such a fundamental part of the academic enterprise that they are more akin to utilities, like electricity, than to novel pedagogical approaches. It is difficult to imagine modern scholarship without these technologies. “Computerized” and “networked” have gone the way of “electrified” and “motorized” in higher education. This turn of events has led to new collaborations, which are powerful examples of what is possible when the physical world is not the limiting, or even an organizing, factor.

Sunoikisis (pronounced Sun-oy-kiss-iss) is an excellent example of such a collaboration. In 1995, Greek and Roman Studies (“Classics”) faculty members from the Associated Colleges of the South met at Rhodes College to discuss how they might work together.²² They were motivated by the limitations of small departments, which ranged from one faculty member to four

faculty members among the fourteen institutions with classics programs. According to Morrell,

The conferees identified two specific areas where collaboration could measurably enhance the ability of individual programs to meet the needs and demands of their students. First, faculty members agreed that majors would greatly benefit from working with a wider variety of faculty members. Majors in small programs may take as many as 10 courses from a single professor over the course of their undergraduate career. Although such mentoring relationships can often work to the advantage of students, the conferees concluded that students should have the opportunity to experience the views and perspectives of other scholars in the discipline. . . . The conferees also concluded that collaborating on a set of easily adaptable, computer-based teaching materials would help make planning and teaching courses less time consuming and demanding.²³

The Sunoikisis virtual classroom uses ever-evolving technology to support teaching and learning. In the early days, this may have been as simple as a conference call. Now, it is multipoint video conferencing. The communications technology is supplemented by a shared course management system and other digital affordances common to both physical and online teaching. Haskell comments, "My students and I gather together in the same physical space where we use Google Hangouts to interact with students and faculty in classrooms around the country. In addition to the synchronous live classes and asynchronous online sessions, we always have on-campus face-to-face sessions as well. We take advantage of all means of communication. . . . We're just exploiting the technology as the medium to share information across physical boundaries."²⁴ The power of Sunoikisis is amplified by a program that goes far beyond virtual classrooms to "excavations, internships, travel study, undergraduate research symposia, and faculty development seminars."²⁵ It has

all of the elements of a world-class Greek and Roman Studies program.

By 1999, the collaboration had formalized around the goal of creating a virtual classics department. They adopted the name *Sunoikisis*, which comes from Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War* and refers to an alliance among cities. Morrell notes, "The name seeks to convey the idea that a group of small but healthy and autonomous programs can develop a set of common goals and design a curriculum that goes far beyond the capacity of any single program."²⁶ The Associated Colleges of the South continued to host the program until 2006, when it became a program of the National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education (NITLE). That opened up participation to NITLE's nearly ninety member institutions. In 2009, Sunoikisis moved a final time, to Harvard's Center for Hellenic Studies in Washington, DC. This further broadened its reach, to more than 160 faculty at 100 institutions.²⁷ As a virtual department, it grew to be one of the biggest classics departments in the world, thus providing opportunities for students at small colleges and universities that were only available at a small number of national research universities. As noted on the collaboration's website,

The curricular elements of Sunoikisis expose our students to a wider range of subject material and faculty than would be possible otherwise. Indeed, the president of an elite northeastern college commented in October 2004 that the Sunoikisis program surpasses programs offered by large institutions in that the collaborative nature unusually enriches it in terms of content and methodological approach. The program, by providing a range and quality of opportunities for majors, prepares students who choose to continue their training in graduate school to compete with graduates from the leading research universities in the country.²⁸

In 2011, NITLE began facilitating conversations between language faculty and academic leadership at five small private

universities in Texas. Based on the success of Sunoikisis and the proliferation of inexpensive, high-definition video-conferencing equipment, a language consortium was envisioned that would supplement the relatively meager modern language offerings at each of the five institutions. Caitlin Moriarity writes, “Schreiner University (Texas), ran into a problem related to world languages courses. ‘If every student wanted to take the same language at the same time and had the same background, we would be okay,’ says McCormick. ‘But students have different goals and want to learn different languages, and trying to meet students’ needs and desires in world languages is in some cases an economic nightmare, for a small liberal arts university like Schreiner. We needed some solution on how to do this.’”²⁹ By sharing their language offerings, this collaboration promised to add elementary, intermediate, and advanced Portuguese, Chinese, German, French, and Spanish courses almost immediately to the curriculum of all five institutions.³⁰ The Texas Language Consortium was formed in 2012 to implement this plan. NITLE staff and fellows, long experienced in online teaching and learning techniques, pitched in to help prepare the faculty for the challenges presented by the medium. They began sharing classes within nine months of the conception of the collaboration.

The Consortium’s “Statement of Shared Purpose” defines both practical and philosophical goals:

Higher education is laboring through uncomfortable transitions in the first decades of the twenty-first century. The interactive relationships made possible by networked technology are balanced by challenges in funding, changes in enrollment patterns, and emergence of new competitors for the attention of students and families. It is incumbent upon our institutions to respond productively to the potential of such connectivity and to provide the “language or intercultural skills” that twenty-first-century college graduates require. All institutions will face this

challenge before they are completely prepared. . . . Failing to navigate these changes has consequences including the under-enrollment in and cancellation of certain courses just at a time when competencies in global and intercultural affairs is clearly critical.

The consortium has since changed its name to the Texas Learning Consortium and expanded its course offerings to engineering, math, health sciences, and religious studies.³¹ It has also received a grant from the Teagle Foundation to document the costs, assess the outcomes, and “create a sustainable structure for the future.”³²

Not all technology-enabled collaborations are as successful as these two. An interesting example is the New Paradigm Initiative of the Associated Colleges of the South. Beginning in 2011, the presidents of the sixteen member institutions began to discuss a grand vision, “taking advantage of the fact that the institutions are part of an alliance of 3,000 faculty and 30,000 students.”³³ Two presidents, at Rollins College and at Hendrix College, were especially vocal proponents of the idea. Rollins President Lewis Duncan wrote, “This initiative allows us to use high-definition video-conferencing technology for inter-institutional learning—generating chances for students to select from a larger number and wider variety of courses, while maintaining the advantages of a small liberal arts learning environment.”³⁴ Unlike Sunoikisis or the Texas Learning Consortium, the New Paradigm Initiative was promulgated from the top down. NITLE staff advised the association to get faculty involved early on and allow the process to be more organic. The association’s newsletter announced that “the initiative must be a faculty-driven effort to succeed. Chief academic officers on each campus will be asked to encourage and work with faculty to explore appropriate new possibilities, working within curriculum approval structures and processes in place on the campuses. . . . A very deliberate process will be followed in order to

ensure that pertinent factors and questions are taken into account.”³⁵ However, in actuality, the initiative continued to be essentially top-down. The first course, Voice and Diction, was shared between Rollins and Hendrix in 2013; unfortunately, it ended up being the last course.³⁶ The lack of faculty interest and support made the continued effort impossible. Good ideas, effective technology, and supportive leadership are important, but faculty buy in and shared governance are equally important to the success of multi-institution collaborations. Fortunately, the Associated Colleges of the South was able to learn from this failed effort and now has a “collaborative curriculum” faculty development program and a “collaboration database” specifically targeted at faculty members who have an interest in inter-institutional collaboration.³⁷

The massive open online course (MOOC) is a collaboration of a different sort. It was born out of a synthesis of open educational resources, video sharing, and new communications technologies. The idea is simple and compelling, namely, that a course can be recorded and shared with the world via the internet. In the January 26, 2013, *New York Times*, Thomas Friedman heralded, “I can see a day soon where you’ll create your own college degree by taking the best online courses from the best professors from around the world—some computing from Stanford, some entrepreneurship from Wharton, some ethics from Brandeis, some literature from Edinburgh—paying only the nominal fee for the certificates of completion.”³⁸ This is a compelling vision, but so was “Teaching with Television.” Many state university systems saw television as an extension of their “industrial” delivery model honed in large lecture halls. W. Joseph King and Michael Nanfito observed, “When you look, for example, at Ohio State University’s fall 2009 course offerings, you find freshman-class enrollments of 374 (Form, Function, Diversity, and Ecology), 298 (Introduction to Theater), 541 (Principles of Macroeconomics), and 671 (Introduction to Biology). All these involve students sitting together in a single lecture hall. Many

liberal arts colleges have smaller numbers in their entire graduating class.”³⁹ Even Friedman reconsidered three months later: “Bottom line: There is still huge value in the residential college experience and the teacher-student and student-student interactions it facilitates. But to thrive, universities will have to nurture even more of those unique experiences while blending in technology to improve education outcomes in measurable ways at lower costs.”⁴⁰ MOOCs will certainly have profound impacts on certain populations—consider the developing world; however, an equally significant impact may be on students in more traditional learning environments.

MOOCs, online tutorials, and other open educational resources make possible much richer classroom experiences. Blended learning and the so-called flipped-classroom allow an instructor to assign materials to be watched or reviewed before class, so that class time may be used for active discussion and problem solving. The class is no longer a delivery mechanism for knowledge but a time when that knowledge can be explored and deeper connections made. Technology and collaboration have reached a point at which pedagogy can begin to be transformed from the lecture, “sage on stage,” and the tutorial, “Socratic method,” which have dominated for centuries, to new models of teaching and learning. These new models may be especially good news for students with different learning styles and cognitive, emotional, or physical disabilities. Discussions of higher education often focus inordinately on the challenges that the twenty-first century portends. However, there are equally important opportunities made possible by technology, and they should be seized.

Collaboration and technology offer higher education new efficiencies, but they offer more than that: they offer new outlooks. Collaboration can be bedeviling, but it can also be transcendent in its ability to increase the capabilities and opportunities for the institutions and individuals (students, faculty, and staff) involved. Their thinking can be changed by the collaboration

in ways that might never have occurred within a single institution. In that sense, collaboration is worth the effort. Likewise, technology in just a few decades has dramatically and subtly changed scholarship and the academy. In 1960 J. C. R. Licklider predicted as much: "The hope is that, in not too many years, human brains and computing machines will be coupled together very tightly, and that the resulting partnership will think as no human brain has ever thought and process data in a way not approached by the information-handling machines we know today."⁴¹ This "human-computer symbiosis" will likely continue or even increase in the future, facilitating and changing teaching, learning, and scholarship in ways that defy prediction.

The Path Forward

The early revolutionaries who founded the first colonial colleges would be amazed by the evolution of American higher education. They understood that the American experiment in democracy presumed an educated citizenry. They knew that education was a cornerstone of a growing economy. In times of great crisis, their successors institutionalized the value of higher education through groundbreaking legislation: the Morrill Act, which created America's land grant colleges using the proceeds from federal land sales, and the GI Bill, which redefined and intensified the role that higher education would play in the transformation of American society. The one constant since the founding of the Republic has been that education has the power to improve—and indeed transform—American society.

A singular and impressive aspect of this evolution has been the ability of higher education to adapt to its environment. America has moved through economies that were successively agricultural and commercial, industrial, and postindustrial. Each phase required its colleges and universities to manage change. It was not a smooth transition; indeed, the extraordinary level of mergers in the late nineteenth century, the development of a

public system of higher education to augment private colleges, and the use of colleges as a safety valve to educate immigrants and their children are characteristic of how Americans adapted higher education to handle the disruptions caused by a rapidly industrializing America. Historically Black Colleges and Universities also opened to offer African Americans an opportunity denied to them in a segregated country. The move toward access and choice after World War II expanded colleges by type, size, and mission as enrollments swelled to accommodate an endless stream of applicants to meet new workforce demands.

As we began our analysis we noted that President J. H. Reynolds of Hendrix College recommended that the 400 colleges that existed when he wrote in 1934 be reduced by two-thirds. Reynolds argued that this reduction would strengthen American higher education by creating a more robust higher education community with higher standards. By 2016 the nearly four thousand nonprofit institutions in the United States served 20.5 million students. In this postindustrial economy, a maturing higher education system now wrestles with the impact of technology, rising student and institutional debt, declining applicant pools of traditional college-age students, and a broken operating model. Yet we end this book with the same deep conviction—this is a classic seminal moment in the ongoing evolution of American higher education. It is a time of challenges that must be met by conviction, nimbleness, and imagination.

The challenges facing America's colleges and universities today are no better or worse than those presented at other times in American history. The sky is not falling around higher education, which remains the best avenue into the middle class. Its institutions drive the most progressive sectors of the American economy. They are the primary employers throughout large swaths of rural America. They produce much of both the basic and applied research that permits America to retain its leading global role in creativity, entrepreneurialism, and cutting-edge product design and development. And they are the foundation

upon which the postindustrial American economy will continue to globalize, training an educated workforce to match new technologies.

It's not that there aren't significant challenges facing American higher education. There are, and the list is growing. American colleges and universities charge sticker prices that correlate, more or less, to their perceived position in the pecking order. With some exceptions, the sticker price is a good indication of how a college's peer schools compare to it, although great teaching can occur anywhere and be quite independent of the financial resources at an institution. But the sticker price indicates what the school can afford in terms of psychological counseling, updated facilities, and the range and depth of student services, including academic and career counseling. In fact, it's where schools get into the most trouble with the American public. Colleges attempt to up the ante through "over the top" promises to consumers on academic programs, student support, and facilities. Do schools really need residence halls that exceed what new graduates will live in when they take their first job after graduation?

The plain cold fact is that sticker prices, now topping \$70,000 at highly selective colleges and universities, are not sustainable. Applicants are moving in large numbers to alternatives to four-year residential experiences. As noted, 42 percent of them opted for first-time admission through community colleges. The Great Recession caused enormous consumer angst, which has been picked up by state and federal officials in the executive and legislative branches who follow their consumer polling to offer legislation and state and federal policies that extend from increased regulation to price controls. Yet all but a handful of America's colleges and universities depend upon tuition, fees, and room and board charges to pay the bills. As tuition discounting climbs to 50 percent for every tuition dollar received, the end is in sight for colleges that do not think about how to develop a new revenue model. It is painful to see what's coming.

The crisis over sticker prices reflects deep concerns also about the value that America's colleges and universities offer to prospective students. Higher education institutions have failed miserably to make their case to American families. In a campus culture that rejects consumer branding of academic and student life programs, it is extraordinarily difficult to explain why any college, absent a few, is different from their peers or those higher in the pecking order, to which they aspire. To argue otherwise would produce an internal revolt on most campuses over the "corporatization" of American higher education. The problem exists on several levels, as institutions show great reluctance to shine the light on the best faculty, staff, and programs, putting themselves at risk for violating campus traditions of collegiality by emphasizing and supporting excellence only in selected programs. Better all boats should rise instead—even when a college can no longer afford to lift them simultaneously.

There is also a growing problem of finding impartial advocates and good strategic partners. The telling joke among public institutions is that they have moved from state owned to state related to state located in the past twenty-five years. Behind this joke, however, is a basic truth. American higher education can no longer assume that state and federal governments will agree to the traditional kinds of partnership that has characterized their relationship for almost seventy-five years. The government was never an inexhaustible money tree. One hopes that government leaders will maintain their commitments to research and student aid. But absent discretionary money, the new game will be regulation. American higher education must be mindful of the downside to older strategic partnerships, which now face some of the new limitations and shifting priorities and approaches. Money and politics can be a strange and dangerous mix.

If our assumptions are correct, American higher education is at an critical moment in its evolution. It relies on a pricing strategy that does not work and that remains largely a mystery to

uneducated stakeholders. Revenue no longer covers expenses. The stated value with outcomes to reinforce it is murky and unclear, and there is a growing sense that astronomically high sticker prices close off the debate over attendance before many applicants even apply. Finally, there is no white knight from the state or federal governments—or any other historic strategic partner—on the horizon to marshal the resources required to make funding available to perpetuate the status quo. Change is inevitable. The speed will be determined by how well a school is positioned by its resources to manage change. Indeed, the premise of the argument throughout this book is that change must come from within.

It's a harsh recognition that colleges and universities must save themselves, but history supports a belief that America's colleges and universities are relevant enough and sufficiently adaptable to do so. In the process there will be winners and losers. It is unlikely that those with the most resources to wait out the changes will automatically be declared the winners. They could be washed over by the pace and the breadth of the changes coming, despite the size of their endowments, and emerge weaker and less relevant. Among the survivors will be the college that has a healthy respect for its history, a refined internal sense of its contributions to society, and an appreciation of the need to balance transparency, tradition, and innovation in strategy and practice. It is also critical that this balance reflect a single-minded and purposeful commitment to the education of its stakeholders. For any higher education institution to survive, it must first know what it does not know.

The path forward must be comprehensive in design. It is not enough to “fix the admissions problem” to generate new revenue. Nor will it be sufficient to launch eternal comprehensive fund-raising campaigns or anticipate that the federal government will replace tuition or donors to fund the changes that must be made as the crisis deepens. The fact is that American colleges and universities rely upon an operating model that grew from

the heady enrollment surges of the last century, when tuition increases always balanced out the growth in annual expenses. These days have ended. The education of the stakeholders in higher education will mean that these groups understand the comprehensive interconnection between the people, programs, and facilities that shape an institution's direction. Survival means understanding how the pieces work together.

It begins with education. We have asserted throughout our analysis that governance is the weakest link in a comprehensive understanding of how colleges and universities work. Of the three principal stakeholders—trustees, faculty, and administration—the trustees are by far the least prepared to govern. Their boards are uninformed, oversubscribed, and heavily dependent on alumni members who often view a college as a personal fiefdom. They meet infrequently, draw too narrowly from a list of candidates drawn from a self-perpetuating pool of former classmates and donors, and fail to prepare their officers and committee chairs for the business of governance. Boards of trustees may either be dominated by their chairs, directly or more discreetly, or damaged by bureaucratic process, in which the committee reporting and meeting times for the “committee of the whole” eats up time that could be much better used for education and healthy debate.

We suspect that one of the most surprising conclusions in this book will be the importance that we ascribe to the faculty in shared governance. As “keepers of the flame,” the best faculty leadership will educate, nurture, and advocate for the educational and student life programs. They are the resident experts. Their expertise shapes critical directional markers about where a college or university heads strategically. To be effective, however, faculty must move beyond wish lists to understand how programs relate to staffing and facilities within an operating budget. The most successful faculty leaders learn how budgets affect strategic direction without attempting to serve as backup

administrators on matters outside their purview. Like the other governors, they must step forward to own the idea that a college is fundamentally an *educational enterprise*. Both words matter here.

The administration, including the president, can also hinder thoughtful governance. Perhaps the most important lesson that a president can learn is that the office is an important job and not a lifetime sinecure. The president must have the right to choose and fire the members of the senior staff, who owe both wise counsel and loyalty to the president. There must be a clear chain of command, with a minimum of background chatter, especially by trustees. The best boards are well informed, policy oriented, strategically directed, and organizationally lean. Good governance requires the same level of introspection and internal assessment that boards expect throughout the institution. Higher education institutions get into the most trouble when shared governance fails.

The trustees, staff, and faculty who share governance responsibility must be willing to adapt their oversight by following a simple axiom: follow the money. Those responsible for shared governance have little understanding of how nonprofits work. They fail to see critical differences between what the findings in a review of a nonprofit budget mean and how they differ from those in a corporate, legal, or small business environment. A successful audit does not mean that an institution is healthy. But any debate about college finances mandates good use of data in which the key—transparency—can also force an institution to become more analytical and strategic. Boards, especially trustees, also confuse efforts by the administration and faculty to be entrepreneurial as taking unnecessary risks; but good stewardship requires creativity and encourages innovation. Sometimes being entrepreneurial means saying no. The goal is to use resources wisely—sometimes saying no as an entrepreneur—to create a strategic advantage.

In many ways, the financial crisis facing most colleges and universities illustrates the stark choices ahead for higher education. The underlying problem is that colleges have tapped out their traditional revenue sources. Families are balking at high sticker prices, and financial discounts make the good intentions behind these discounts increasingly impossible to keep. Auxiliary revenues are flat. Many colleges cannot access the debt market, or their boards are unwilling to have them do so. Fund-raising is a long-term boost at best, but most institutions cannot do better than run in place. Endowment returns are miserable and are affected cyclically by rolling quarterly averages that will spread the problem out several years going forward. The only practical solution is to look at the way all the pieces are put together. Institutions must think conservatively about how to innovate with the resources they have available. Can America's colleges and universities continue to finance their footprint? Should they focus on their academic mission and seek new partners to help them in areas in which they lack expertise, scale, or funding?

We have argued that understanding how to run a college begins with enrollment, principally because colleges and universities are overwhelmingly tuition dependent. Rising financial aid discounts are collapsing revenue streams. Yet the fixed costs of running a college continue, especially since they are so labor dependent. Current employment practices, including the heavy use of adjuncts, diminishing retiree benefits, and modified health plans, only tinker at the edges. A good enrollment policy must start with an understanding that mass mailings of glossy four-color brochures to wealthy zip codes will not produce the quantity or quality of rich applicants to offset spiraling financial aid discounts across an admissions class. The solution begins with a sharper understanding of realistic enrollment goals—goals that mirror demographic shifts in recruiting.

To this end, there must be a restructuring on college campuses to adjust recruiting to a carefully balanced long-term

enrollment strategy. It starts with determining the optimal size of a college or university, balanced against the faculty, staff, and facilities in place. In some cases, it will rely on a clear delineation of admission building blocks that takes the established blocks—legacies, student-athletes, academic discipline-based interests, and “over the transom” applicants—and adds to them groups that fit dynamically into a broader mix. At most colleges, it may mean a much better crafted and more carefully designed transfer program. At others, it may be redeploying resources to adjust to changing demographic patterns to build a deeper pool of applicants, which will strengthen outreach to minorities and all socioeconomic groups. At most, it will mean sharpening the enrollment tactics to include affinity-branded applicants who might come to college to pursue nonacademic interests and find both a good education and a well-regarded marching band or its equivalent a good fit for them.

Devising new enrollment strategies is a far better approach than opening underresourced graduate, continuing education, and online programs that have short shelf lives and are often outside the historic mandate and capabilities of the institution. Whatever the decision, these new strategies must have a symbiotic relationship with a sophisticated financial aid model that is more science than art and is sufficiently predictive to assure that financial aid dollars will be spent wisely. Nothing constricts an operating budget more than tuition revenue shortfalls caused by the failure of enrollment projections spiked by bad financial aid practices. In this new paradigm, colleges and universities must also look at how to create reasonable enrollment projections that balance expectations to insure that an institution’s operations are not impaired by a weak admissions cycle.

While enrollment creates the tuition revenue that funds the operating budget, advancement is the tool that most colleges and universities use to evolve or, in many cases, reinvent themselves. There is a synergistic relationship between the subdivisions of the advancement operation: development, marketing,

communications, and constituent relations. When the pieces work together, colleges can move forward with a clear purpose and direction. But they should think carefully about how best to deploy the tools in the advancement arsenal. It makes little sense at most institutions to use continuous comprehensive campaigns as a viable fund-raising strategy unless the single primary goal is to hit a public relations target in funds raised. To build momentum and confidence, stakeholders need optics to see the purpose behind fund-raising. Micro-campaigns in a focused fund-raising agenda can support the annual fund and deferred gift strategies more effectively. It is better to win the optics than to wear out the donors by playing the numbers games associated with a large comprehensive campaign.

To move advancement forward, colleges and universities must have a clearer sense of their stakeholders and the tools they use to reach them. Alumni are “cradle through career” enthusiasts, closely akin to faculty in their affiliation to the institution. They are important “insiders,” whose affection, needs, and expectations change with the length of their association. Young alumni require a reason to prioritize their alma mater even before they graduate. The best practice is to answer the question most frequently raised by them: What’s in it for me? The answer begins with reimagining how alumni relate to their alma mater, linking often moribund operations like the career center to graduates’ needs as they transition to alumni. However the configurations work on a college campus, the role of constituents like alumni and parents must be intertwined with and tied to the marketing message. In the end, advancement is how a college communicates its purpose and finances its evolution, above operating expenses.

College is an educational enterprise, although the missions among institutions may vary widely. But the great constant across American campuses is that the faculty are the heart of the institution. As a critical group within shared governance, they must have academic freedom and the promise of tenure, whether

lifetime or long term, to be effective governors contributing to the direction an institution takes. They are the nexus of innovation, tradition, and creativity where education comes alive on a campus. The faculty is the longest-serving group within shared governance and typically the most conservative. What happens on a campus most directly affects them. Like the alumni, they are the “keepers of the flame,” but unlike alumni, they are the daily watchdogs and commentators who shape college policy.

Three conditions must occur for the faculty to be the most effective they can be in shared governance. First, they must focus on their primary responsibility—the academic and student life programs, recognizing that the integration of these programs is critical because so much learning takes place beyond the classroom and the laboratory. Second, they must modernize their process-driven internal governance systems, reducing overlapping jurisdiction and the proliferation of committees to improve focus and create basic efficiencies to improve their contributions to campus. Third, they must work to imagine new systems that relate education to other campus-wide problems, for example, retention, student debt, use of facilities, and timely graduation. The best-practice institutions must preserve great learning by rethinking and reinforcing how and when it gets done.

Student life represents the “other” teachable moment on a college campus. It is governed by a social contract—real or implied—that defines the relationship of a student to campus. Students arrive on campus with financial, social, cultural, and psychological needs that must be balanced against their in-class learning. As we noted, a good student life program is code for retention. Retention is the key to improving the educational experience. American colleges and universities must commit to the continuing professionalization of student life staff and give them the respect that they deserve. Student life programming can also relate students to their institution by offering an affinity that goes beyond the learning experience. This is where colleges get into the most trouble; when something bad happens, it is often

because of a student life issue that arose. But, when done right, an integrated learning environment breathes life into a college's mission and reaffirms its identity.

Student life is also a place where American higher education may have a golden opportunity to innovate. In the weaker student life settings, the program may simply be a curious, idiosyncratic amalgam of accreted initiatives that are costly and no longer serve the institution. It can also be the place where the focus on how to meet specific student needs across the spectrum can encourage reexamination of programs that no longer work. Student life can also provide an opportunity for creativity and imagination, for example, to include judicious employment of new staff who address the needs of shifting demographics. It can also be a place where programs are separated from facilities to open college finances to third-party developers, outsourced operations, and public/private partnerships. Will quality improve if non-core, nonacademic facilities and programs are reimaged to reduce depreciation, lower debt, and provide the financial resources to build out new academic facilities? Should colleges be in the food and hotel business as part of their core operations, for example, if the money is better spent on the academic program?

Athletics provides an excellent window into how colleges and universities can implement some of the changes that must occur. Among the largest programs, many universities are caught between a lucrative cable contract and a regulatory parent in the NCAA, augmented by the importance that athletics plays in developing their institutional brand, especially with alumni and donors. Yet nationally, only one in eight athletics programs pays for itself. Among the smaller schools, athletics is an admissions building block and serves very different if interconnected institutional goals. As colleges evolve, there will need to be a better understanding of how athletics contributes to the financial bottom line of the institution. Athletics must also be better subordinated into student life, avoiding the misstep of a protected

fiefdom supported by donors and alumni trustees for whom athletics was their point of connection with their alma mater. Athletics can play an invaluable role in fostering key student life objectives, but why and how must be much more clearly delineated.

Technology can seem a little like the dog that caught the car. Higher education institutions are labor and capital intensive, with technology costs profoundly affecting capital outlay. If unchecked, the cost of technology can present colleges with a quandary that dramatically affects institutional strategy. The use of technology can enhance teaching and eliminate many geographical impediments to recruiting and retention. Without a thoughtful plan, however, technology can become a recurring budgetary problem spiraling out of control. One solution is to use technology wisely to empower learning and frame student outcomes. This presumes that colleges say no to some uses and recognize that a comprehensive institutional strategy must drive decisions on when and how to incorporate its use. In this sense, technology answers the question of how it lowers the cost of doing business while advancing learning outcomes.

One of the most productive avenues is collaboration. Collaboration occurs on many levels and requires, if it is to work well, subordinating individual institutional uniqueness to the common good. Internally, the opportunity to collaborate across campus is especially attractive and can foster open dialogue and highly creative cross-disciplinary approaches to education. The best collaborative efforts on a college campus permit faculty and staff to move beyond their academic disciplines—English, history, mathematics, or geography, for instance—to teach more broadly, as social scientists, humanists, artists, and engineers. These efforts are among the most promising and nimble demonstrations of how faculty and staff rethink the pedagogy. In doing so, they better define the academic program to incorporate new technology and greater campus-wide efficiencies. These efforts also enhance established campus-wide business

efficiencies. But the best of them move beyond the campus gates to innovate in admission, retention, academic programs, student life, and athletics, among other areas. These efforts are a way to translate innovation and efficiency into momentum. A great collaboration can make student learning come alive.

When we began, we argued that American higher education must adapt to a postindustrial economy, providing education to a global community. Colleges and universities in the United States have a record of almost 375 years of innovation and adaptation upon which to shape their solutions. The higher education community also has the capacity and leadership to set the terms of future engagement with learners. America's colleges and universities must recognize, however, that they face two pervasive issues. The first is the simpler one to solve. With an eye to historic and cultural precedent, they must work to improve delivery by identifying basic efficiencies, economies of scale, and collaborative partners to deliver a cost-sensitive education with clear returns on investment to consumers. The second issue is more difficult because the changes called for are systemic. Some colleges will not prosper and cannot survive the rigors that will affect them in the twenty-first century. For them, change that is fundamentally systemic may be impossible. These schools will merge or close.

For those that adapt, it will be best to think about how higher education can stand alone to make its own case. The historic strategic partnerships are evolving, with state and federal partners likely diminishing their financial stake as they realign state and federal priorities. The first signs already indicate a renegotiation of the arrangements worked out in the last century. America's colleges and universities should not assume that continuous increases in research support and student aid, including rapid growth in programs like the Pell Grant, are sacrosanct. They should anticipate a stricter regulatory climate. They should also be prepared for political solutions, with proposals like free college tuition, even if it means overwhelming the

support systems within public colleges, thereby creating chaos throughout higher education. Even well-meaning programs can wreak havoc if they are not organic, deliberative, and consensus-driven.

In the end, it comes down to the basic challenge of whether shared governance can match tradition with innovation. Most colleges will continue to advance the tradition of the liberal arts in a residential setting. They will need to be mindful of the best practices in higher education and move quickly to implement them. They must be fully prepared to address systemic changes, beginning if necessary with how a college governs itself. Their actions must be clearly defined and fully transparent. The solutions must be comprehensive, with optics to match words to deeds. Above all, the governors—trustees, faculty, and administration—must have the courage to lead.

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Notes

Preface

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Introduction

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Chapter 1. Governance and Management

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4. Sweet Briar College may be the underdog story of 2015. When closure was announced in March 2015, officials cited a lack of prospective students interested in attending a women's college, a decreasing interest in liberal arts education, and a lack of interest in colleges in rural locations. The college also suffered from sharp tuition discounts, which cut into the amount raised through tuition (see Scott Jaschik, "Shocking Decision at Sweet Briar," *Inside Higher Ed*, Mar. 4, 2015, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/03/04/sweet-briar-college-will-shut-down>). By June the board had reached an agreement with alumnae to keep the college open, with the president and much of the board being replaced and the alumnae group, Saving Sweet Briar, agreeing to raise more than \$12 million to keep the college open through the 2015-16 academic year (Scott Jaschik, "Sweet Briar Survives," *Inside Higher Ed*, June 22, 2015, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/06/22/deal-will-save-sweet-briar-college>). When the University of Virginia board issued Sullivan a resignation letter in 2012, the "sense of secret maneuvering infuriated faculty and other supporters" of Sullivan (Patricia Sellers, "The Unluckiest President in America," *Fortune*, Mar. 25, 2015, <http://fortune.com/2015/03/25/uva-president-teresa-sullivan/>). Sullivan was quickly reinstated. See also Susan R. Pierce's *Governance Reconsidered: How Boards, Presidents, Administrators, and Faculty Can Help Their Colleges Thrive* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2014. ProQuest ebrary. Web. 27 Sept. 2016), 158-60.
5. There is a concise review of Birmingham Southern College's 2010 meltdown in Pierce's *Governance Reconsidered* (154-56).
6. *Ibid.*, 160-61.
7. See Alice W. Brown, *Cautionary Tales: Strategy Lessons from Struggling Colleges* (Sterling, VA: Stylus, 2013), accessed Oct. 31, 2016, ProQuest ebrary, chap. 4. Also see Jon Marcus, "Once Invisible, College Boards of Trustees Are Suddenly in the Spotlight," *Hechinger Report*, Apr. 30, 2015, <http://hechingerreport.org/once-invisible-college-boards-of-trustees-are-suddenly-in-the-spotlight>.
8. In the chapter "Another Season of Discontent: The Critics," Christopher J. Lucas discusses the culture wars of the 1980s and 1990s (*American Higher Education: A History*, 2nd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006). The liberal versus conservative portrayal of higher

education has not gone away, with the focus still being on the inclusion of alternative and minority viewpoints in curriculum. For a recent example, see Michael Poliakoff and Armand Alacbay, *Education or Reputation? A Look at America's Top-Ranked Liberal Arts Colleges* (Washington, DC: American Council of Trustees and Alumni, 2014), <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED560912>; and Elwood D. Watson, "Are Conservatives Eager to Reunite the Academic Culture Wars?," *Huffington Post*, Feb. 21, 2014, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/elwood-d-watson/are-conservatives-culture-wars_b_4828280.html; as well as Colleen Flaherty, "'Lost Generation,'" *Inside Higher Ed*, July 25, 2016, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/07/25/academics-fact-check-pervasive-idea-liberal-academics-indoctrinate-their-students>.

9. Of 214 respondents to a 2008 survey, 5 percent implemented a total freeze for faculty positions and 43 percent implemented a partial freeze. Many universities also reassessed planned construction projects. The same survey shows that 50 percent of respondents either planned or had postponed or canceled building projects (Goldie Blumenstyk, "Colleges Protect Workers and Cut Elsewhere," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Jan. 9, 2009, <http://www.chronicle.com/article/Colleges-Protect-Workers-and/24809#survey>). For example, in 2009 Stanford canceled or suspended \$1.3 billion worth of projects not already in progress (see Kathleen J. Sullivan, "University Suspends \$1.3 billion in Capital Projects," *Stanford Report*, Jan. 28, 2009, <http://news.stanford.edu/news/2009/january28/provost-012809.html>), and Harvard suspended projects slated for Boston's Allston Neighborhood (see Jonah S. Lefkoe and Hannah Natanson, "Breaking Ground: New Allston Projects Underway," *Harvard Crimson*, Feb. 2, 2016, <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2016/2/2/allston-update-imp-2016>).
10. Charles Moore, *Daniel H. Burnham, Architect, Planner of Cities*, Vol. 2 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1921), 147, <https://archive.org/details/danielhburnhamaro2moor>.
11. As mentioned above, many universities and college put hiring freezes in place following the Great Recession. In 2009, approximately 24 percent of faculty was tenured or on the tenure track, while more than 56 percent was part time or full time, but nontenure track. The numbers are similar for 2014: 29.5 percent either having tenure or

being on the tenure track and just over 57 percent being part time or full time, but nontenure track (American Association of University Professors, “Higher Education at a Crossroads: The Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession, 2015–16,” *Academe*, Mar./Apr. 2016, <https://www.aaup.org/sites/default/files/2015-16EconomicStatusReport.pdf>). Adjunct and contingent faculty are pushing back—for example, through unionization. While unionizing may secure more financial security for contingent faculty, it may not increase full-time employment or address many of the other underlying issues, such as academic freedom and professional development (see American Association of University Professors, “Higher Education at a Crossroads”). The AAUP advocates for consolidating contingent appointments into full-time, tenure-track positions. Also see Lisa Liberty Becker, “Adjuncts Are Unionizing, but That Won’t Fix What’s Wrong in Higher Education,” *Washington Post*, June 6, 2016, https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2016/06/06/adjuncts-are-unionizing-but-that-wont-fix-whats-wrong-in-higher-education/?utm_term=.a05f82142bb4). How can administrators combat the unionization trend? Well, one option is to “treat your employees well and pay them a fair wage” (Josh Boldt, “Off Track: How to Bust an Adjunct Union,” *Chronicle Vitae*, Jan. 7, 2014, <https://chroniclevitae.com/news/254-off-track-how-to-bust-an-adjunct-union>). See also Scott Jaschik, “When Colleges Rely on Adjuncts, Where Does the Money Go?,” *Inside Higher Ed*, Jan. 5, 2017, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/01/05/study-looks-impact-adjunct-hiring-college-spending-patterns>.

12. The faculty is often concerned about cuts and how the reasoning behind those cuts are communicated, especially if there is a lack of transparency (Kellie Woodhouse, “Money Talk,” *Inside Higher Ed*, Apr. 2015, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/04/28/communication-issue-college-administrators-and-faculty-during-era-financial-change>).
13. See Susan Whealler Johnston, “How Governing Boards Fail,” in Alice W. Brown, *Cautionary Tales: Strategy Lessons from Struggling Colleges* (Sterling, VA: Stylus, 2013), accessed Oct. 31, 2016, ProQuest ebrary; William M. Griffin and Rebecca S. Lake, “What Board Members Say about Trustee Education,” *Trusteeship*, Jan.–Feb. 2013, <http://agb.org/trusteeship/2013/1/what-board-members-say-about>

- trustee-education; David Rubinstein and Richard Riddell, "Board Chairs and Board Professionals: Partners in Governance," *Trusteeship*, Jan.-Feb. 2014, <http://agb.org/trusteeship/2014/1/board-chairs-and-board-professionals-partners-governance>; as well as Brian C. Mitchell, "The New Rules of Engagement," *Academe* (May-June 2013), <https://www.aaup.org/article/new-rules-engagement#.VF8smpn7c>. The AGB has videos, pamphlets, and webinars covering a spectrum of topics well-informed board trustees should be aware of (see "AGB University," accessed Oct. 10, 2016, <http://agb.org/agbu>); and there are several classic publications available, such as James L. Fisher and James V. Koch, "Governing Boards and the President," in *Presidential Leadership: Making a Difference*, ed. James L. Fisher and James V. Koch (Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press, 1996); and Richard T. Ingram, *Trustee Responsibilities: A Basic Guide for Governing Boards of Independent (or Public) Institutions* (Washington, DC: Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, 1997).
14. Again, see "Board Policies, Practices, and Composition." As mentioned above, the average number of voting board members for private institutions is twenty-nine, more than twice as large as public boards, where the average is twelve.
 15. For board size and basic demographics, see "Board Policies, Practices, and Composition"; for board administration, including executive committees, see Louis H. Heilbron, *The College and University Trustee: A View from the Board Room* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1973); for guidance on public institutions, see Richard T. Ingram and Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, *Effective Trusteeship: A Guide for Board Members of Public Colleges and Universities* (Washington, DC: Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, 1995), as well as Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, *Effective Governing Boards: A Guide for Members of Governing Boards of Public Colleges, Universities, and Systems* (Washington, DC, 2011); for guidance on private institutions, see Richard T. Ingram and Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, *Trustee Responsibilities: A Basic Guide for Governing Boards of Independent Institutions. The Fundamentals. Board Basics* (Washington, DC, 1997) and Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, *Effective Governing Boards: A Guide for Members of Governing Boards of Independent Colleges and Universities*

(Washington, DC, 2009). Finally, Johnston discusses how a reliance on an executive committee can have negative consequences (“How Governing Boards Fail”).

16. Marcus, “Once Invisible, . . . in the Spotlight.” In general, alumni make up approximately half of board members, for both public and private nonprofit institutions; see Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, *2010 Policies, Practices, and Composition of Governing Boards of Independent Colleges and Universities* (Washington, DC: AGB Press/TIAA-CREF Institute, 2010) and *2010 Policies, Practices, and Composition of Governing Boards of Public Colleges and Universities* (Washington, DC: Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, 2010). There are pros and cons to this, as noted in Johnston, “How Governing Boards Fail,” 26–27. For a discussion on faculty and student representation, see the AGB surveys mentioned above. For the role of governance committees and in particular their roll in utilizing the strengths of trustees, see E. B. Wilson, “Creating a Cadre of Leaders on College and University Boards,” *Trusteeship*, Mar.–Apr., 2015, <http://agb.org/trusteeship/2015/marchapril/creating-a-cadre-of-leaders-on-college-and-university-boards>.
17. Harvard is governed by a Board of Overseers and by the Corporation, which is composed of the president, the treasurer, and several Fellows. The overseers are elected by alumni, and “the Board exerts broad influence over the University’s strategic directions, provides counsel to the University leadership on priorities and plans, and has the power of consent to certain actions of the Corporation.” The Corporation has fiduciary responsibility over academic, financial, and physical resources of the university (“Harvard’s President and Leadership,” Harvard University, accessed Oct. 19, 2016, <http://www.harvard.edu/about-harvard/harvards-president-leadership>).
18. Teaching and fiscal issues are intertwined. To paraphrase William F. Massy: if the faculty does not see teaching costs as their problem, it becomes the administration’s problem, a group far removed from the realities of teaching (“Faculty Members Must Play Their Part in Keeping Teaching Costs under Control,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 1, 2016, <http://www.chronicle.com/article/Faculty-Members-Must-Play/236294>).
19. For an example of good practice in developing a leadership pool, see Wilson, “Creating a Cadre of Leaders on College and University Boards.”

20. Obviously the Association of Governing Boards has a wealth of resources regarding board-president relations, as well as board-faculty relations. For examples of each, see Harry L. Peterson, "Board-President Relations: How to Make It Work," *AGB Newsletter*, Fall 2015, <http://agb.org/newsletter/ceo/2015/fall/board-president-relations-how-to-make-it-work>; and Roger G. Baldwin, "Bridging the Different Worlds of Faculties and Boards," *Trusteeship*, Sept.-Oct. 2012, <http://agb.org/trusteeship/2012/9/bridging-different-worlds-faculties-and-boards>. For more information, see Johnston, "How Governing Boards Fail," and Mitchell, "The New Rules of Engagement."
21. Both the scandal at the University of Illinois regarding board overreach in terms of admissions (Pierce, *Governance Reconsidered*, 160-61) and the attempted firing of Sullivan at UVa (see n. 4) are leading examples of bad board practices.
22. Board members, and others in positions of power, need to be aware that their personal social media observations are open to critique, as in the case of Ursinus College board chairman Michael Marcon (Susan Snyder, "Ursinus College Controversy Erupts over Board Chairman's Tweets," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, Sept. 5, 2016, http://www.philly.com/philly/education/20160906_Ursinus_College_controversy_erupts_over_board_chairman_s_tweets.html).
23. In 2011, the average tenure for college presidents was 7.1 years, down from 8.5 years in 2006 (American Council on Education, *The American College President, 2012* (Washington, DC: ACE, 2012). A 2016 survey shows that, for their current position, 22 percent of respondents had served 10+ years; 26 percent had served for 5-10 years; 20 percent for 3-5 years; 30 percent for 6 months to 3 years; and 3 percent less than 6 months (Scott Jaschik and Doug Lederman, eds., *The 2016 Inside Higher Ed Survey of College and University Presidents* (Washington, DC: Inside Higher Ed and Gallup).
24. Frank H. T. Rhodes, "When Governance Goes Awry," *Trusteeship*, Sept.-Oct. 2012, <http://agb.org/trusteeship/2012/9/when-governance-goes-awry-what-are-takeaways>.
25. For guidance on conducting presidential assessments, see the AGB's governance briefs on the subject, which include, but are not limited to, the following: "Presidential Assessment," Association of Governing Boards, accessed Oct. 19, 2016, <http://agb.org/briefs/presidential-assessment>; "Annual Presidential Assessment," Association of

- Governing Boards, accessed Oct. 19, 2016, <http://agb.org/briefs/annual-presidential-assessment>; “Comprehensive Presidential Assessment,” Association of Governing Boards, accessed Oct. 19, 2016, <http://agb.org/briefs/comprehensive-presidential-assessment>. See also Judith A. Wilde and James H. Finkelstein, “Hiring a Search Firm? Do Your Homework First,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Nov. 20, 2016, <http://www.chronicle.com/article/Hiring-a-Search-Firm-Do-Your/238456/>.
26. Johnston emphasizes the importance of self-assessment in “How Governing Boards Fail,” and James E. Orlikoff offers some advice on evaluating board chairs in “A Board Is as Good as Its Chair: Leading a Team of Men and Women Who Themselves Are Leaders Can Be a Challenge. Sometimes the Solution Is as Simple as a Written Job Description,” *Trusteeship*, July-Aug. 2000, 24-28.
 27. Kevin Kiley, “Too High a Price?,” *Inside Higher Ed*, Oct. 1, 2012. <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2012/10/01/grinnell-one-country-s-wealthiest-colleges-questions-sustainability-financial-aid>.

Chapter 2. Finance

1. National Association of College and University Business Officers and Commonfund Institute, *2016 NACUBO-Commonfund Study of Endowments* (Washington, DC: NACUBO, 2017), 1.
2. *Ibid.*, 64.
3. National Association of College and University Business Officers, “Educational Endowments Report –1.9% Return for FY2016 as 10-Year Return Falls to 5.0%,” Jan. 31, 2017, <http://www.nacubo.org/Documents/about/pressreleases/2016%20NCSE%20Press%20Release%20FINAL.pdf>; National Association of College and University Business Officers and Commonfund Institute, *2016 NACUBO-Commonfund Study of Endowments*, fig. 2.1, 9.
4. Dan Allenby, “Class Exodus,” *CASE Currents*, Oct. 2014, 26.
5. *Ibid.*, 28.
6. Michael Santoli, “Wesleyan’s Chief Investment Officer, Anne Martin, Is Reshaping the Institution’s Approach to Endowment Management,” *Wesleyan*, Spring 2012, 36.
7. Jennifer Ma et al., *Trends in College Pricing, 2015* (Washington, DC: College Board, 2015), 17, table 2A.

8. Rick Seltzer, "Discounting Hits New Highs," *Inside Higher Ed*, May 16, 2016, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/05/16/discount-rates-rise-yet-again-private-colleges-and-universities>.
9. *Ibid.*, 23, 24, figs. 12 and 13.
10. *Ibid.*, 22.
11. National Association of College and University Business Officers and Commonfund Institute, *2016 NACUBO-Commonfund Study of Endowments*, 50.
12. *Ibid.*, 34.
13. Sweet Briar College News, "Board of Directors Votes to Close College at the End of 2014-2015 Academic Year," entry by Christy Jackson, Mar. 4, 2015, <http://sbc.edu/news/board-of-directors-votes-to-close-college-at-the-end-of-2014-2015-academic-year/>.
14. Rick Seltzer, "Sweet Briar Budgets \$20M in Donations for 2017," *Inside Higher Ed*, Aug. 25, 2016, <https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2016/08/25/sweet-briar-budgets-20m-donations-2017>.
15. Jim Collins and Jerry I. Porras, *Built to Last* (New York: HarperBusiness, 1997).
16. Malcolm Gladwell, "The Sure Thing," *New Yorker*, Jan. 18, 2010, 27.
17. Tarun Khanna, Jaeyong Song, and Kyungmook Lee, "The Paradox of Samsung's Rise," *Harvard Business Review*, July-Aug. 2011.
18. *Ibid.*, 3.
19. Steve Bartolin, "Open Letter from Broadmoor President Steve Bartolin," *Colorado Springs Business Journal*, Jan. 26, 2010, <http://www.csbj.com/2010/01/26/open-letter-from-broadmoor-president-steve-bartolin>.
20. Terry Young, "What Higher Education Can Learn from the Healthcare Reforms," *Times Higher Education*, Jan. 30, 2016, <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/blog/what-higher-education-can-learn-healthcare-reforms>.
21. National Association of College and University Business Officers and Commonfund Institute, *2016 NACUBO-Commonfund Study of Endowments*, 50.
22. Lawrence Biemiller, "Small, Rural Colleges Grapple with Their Geography," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 10, 2016, <http://www.chronicle.com/article/Small-Rural-Colleges-Grapple/236761>.
23. *Ferrum College News*, "New Franklin County Family YMCA Opens on Campus," Dec. 10, 2012, http://www.ferrum.edu/campus_life/news

- /Articles/new_franklin_county_family_ymca_opens_on_campus.html.
24. See Eric Peters, "Emory & Henry to Receive \$51 Million in USDA Funding for Campus Improvements," *USDA Newsroom*, Sept. 15, 2016, <http://www.rd.usda.gov/newsroom/news-release/emory-henry-receive-51-million-usda-funding-campus-improvements>; and Brent Treash, "College Breaks Ground on Apartment Style Community," *Emory & Henry College News*, Oct. 7, 2016, <http://www.ehc.edu/news/2016/10/college-breaks-ground-apartment-style-community>.
 25. NEWS @ Washington and Lee, "Federal Grant Provides Funding for Broadband Access," Aug. 18, 2010, <http://www2.wlu.edu/x49918.xml>.
 26. In 2003, Stanford gave a fifty-one-year lease on Stanford Shopping Center to Simon Property Group for \$333 million and retained ownership of the land underneath the structure (John Sanford, "Leading Mall Firm to Manage Shopping Center in \$333 Million Lease Agreement," *Stanford Report*, July 9, 2003, <http://news.stanford.edu/news/2003/july9/shoppingcenter-79.html>). Future minimum rental income for Stanford's investment properties, including the Stanford Shopping Center and the Stanford Research Park, exceeded \$118 million (2015 and 2014 *Stanford University Annual Report*, Aug. 31, 2015, 38, http://bondholder-information.stanford.edu/pdf/SU_AnnualFinancialReport_2015.pdf).
 27. Sonja Sherwood, "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Schuylkill Yards," Drexel NOW, Mar. 30, 2016, <http://drexel.edu/now/archive/2016/March/OrrisQA/>.
 28. Jill Colford Schoeniger, "College Row Apartments Open," *Franklin & Marshall Magazine*, Nov. 23, 2007, <http://www.fandm.edu/magazine/archive/matters/2007/11/23/college-row-apartments-open>; David Adelman and Tom Kingston, "A Small School with a Big Dream: Franklin & Marshall's Campus Gateway Project," presentation slides, accessed Oct. 12, 2016, http://www.nacubo.org/documents/prof_dev/ppp07_franklinmarshl-adlmnkgstn.pdf.
 29. Apryl Motley, "The Download on Upkeep," *Business Officer Magazine*, Dec. 2015, http://www.nacubo.org/Business_Officer_Magazine/Magazine_Archives/Dec._2015/The_Download_on_Upkeep.html.

Chapter 3. Enrollment

1. Eric Hoover and Sara Lipka, “Enrollment Goals Remain Elusive for Small Colleges,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Dec. 11, 2016, <http://www.chronicle.com/article/Enrollment-Goals-Remain/238624>.
2. Percentages calculated from figure 1 in Jennifer Ma et al., *Trends in College Pricing 2015* (Washington, DC: College Board, 2015), 12–13; see also Rick Seltzer, “Tuition Revenue Growth Projected for Private Colleges,” *Inside Higher Ed*, Nov. 30, 2016, https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2016/11/30/tuition-revenue-growth-projected-private-colleges?mc_cid=f571688cb7&mc_eid=7a42e0f1cd.
3. Although their reliance on tuition was slightly down in 2014, public colleges had to “rely on tuition dollars nearly a third more than they did before the recession” (Kellie Woodhouse, “Public Colleges’ Revenue Shift,” *Inside Higher Ed*, Apr. 13 2015, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/04/13/report-shows-public-higher-educations-reliance-tuition>).
4. The Chronicle of Higher Education almanac shows that sales and services auxiliary enterprises, for instance, were \$21.5 million FY 2012, \$21.9 million FY 2013, and \$22.8 million FY 2014 at public, four-year institutions and \$15.5 million FY 2012, \$15.9 million FY 2013, and \$16.4million FY 2014 at private, nonprofit institutions (“Colleges’ Revenue and Expenditures, FY 2012,” *Almanac of Higher Education 2014*, Aug. 18, 2014, <http://www.chronicle.com/article/Colleges-Revenue-and/147857>; Chronicle of Higher Education, *2015–2016 Almanac of Higher Education*, “Colleges’ Revenue and Expenditures, FY 2012”; and “Colleges’ Revenue and Expenditures, FY 2014,” *Data from the 2016 Almanac*, Aug. 14, 2016, http://www.chronicle.com/interactives/almanac-2016?cid=UCHESIDENAV2#id=64_414).
5. “Fast Facts: Back to School Statistics,” National Center for Education Statistics, accessed Oct. 9, 2016, <http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=372>.
6. National Center for Education Statistics, “Table 105.20. Enrollment in elementary, secondary, and degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by level and control of institution, enrollment level, and attendance status and sex of student: Selected years, fall 1990 through fall 2025,” *Digest of Educational Statistics*, table prepared Feb. 2016, accessed Oct. 13, 2016, http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_105.20.asp?current=yes.

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8. National Center for Education Statistics, "Table 303.10. Total fall enrollment in degree-granting postsecondary institutions, by attendance status, sex of student, and control of institution: Selected years, 1947 through 2025," *Digest of Educational Statistics*, table prepared Feb. 2016, accessed Oct. 14, 2016, http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d15/tables/dt15_303.10.asp?current=yes.
9. Jens Manuel Krogstad and Richard Fry, "More Hispanics, Blacks Enrolling in College, but Lag in Bachelor's Degrees," *Fact Tank* (Pew Research Center), Apr. 24, 2014, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/04/24/more-hispanics-blacks-enrolling-in-college-but-lag-in-bachelors-degrees/>.
10. Jennifer Ma and Sandy Baum, *Trends in Community Colleges: Enrollment, Prices, Student Debt, and Completion* (New York: College Board, 2015), 1, <http://trends.collegeboard.org/sites/default/files/trends-in-community-colleges-research-brief.pdf>; National student Clearinghouse Research Center, *Snapshot Report Mobility*, Spring 2012, accessed Oct. 20, 2016, <https://nscresearchcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/SnapshotReport6-TwoYearContributions.pdf>.
11. Only 11.6 percent achieved this goal (The Century Foundation Task Force on Preventing Community Colleges from Becoming Separate and Unequal, *Bridging the Higher Education Divide: Strengthening Community Colleges and Restoring the American Dream* [New York: Century Foundation Press, 2013]), 3-4, https://tcf.org/assets/downloads/20130523-Bridging_the_Higher_Education_Divide-REPORT-ONLY.pdf). See also "Community College FAQs," Community College Research Center, accessed Oct. 10, 2016, <http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/Community-College-FAQs.html>; and Kelley Holland, "Is Community College a Stepping Stone? That Depends," *CNBC*, Apr. 25, 2016, <http://www.cnbc.com/2016/04/25/is-community-college-a-stepping-stone-that-depends.html>.
12. "About Private Colleges," National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, accessed Oct. 2016, http://www.naicu.edu/data_research/page/about-private-colleges.

13. Ry Rivard, "Mass Education," *Inside Higher Ed*, Oct. 29, 2014, www.insidehighered.com/news/2014/10/29/massachusetts-higher-ed-officials-want-half-billion-dollars-and-better-respect; Neil Swidey, "The College Debt Crisis Is Even Worse Than You Think," *Boston Globe*, May 18, 2016, <https://www.bostonglobe.com/magazine/2016/05/18/hopes-dreams-debt/fR6ocKakwUlGokjTlONTN/story.html>.
14. There are three groups of state-supported institutions in Pennsylvania: those that receive state funding but are self-governing; the state-owned and publicly governed institutions; and a relatively small number of community colleges (fourteen) (see "Postsecondary and Adult Education," Pennsylvania Department of Education, accessed Oct. 20, 2016, <http://www.education.pa.gov/Postsecondary-Adult/Pages/default.aspx#tab-1>, and Christopher J. Lucas, *American Higher Education: A History*, 2nd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), Kindle ed., locations 5563-81). This doesn't include private colleges in the state, which, as in many other eastern states, are numerous. The University of Pennsylvania is a perfect example of the historic complexities of American higher education as related to the role of the state in terms of support and of governance; see Roger L. Geiger, *The History of American Higher Education: Learning and Culture from the Founding to World War II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), 96-98.
15. These "Massive Open Online Courses" are meant to be free and accessible online. Often they're offered by university faculty (see Jenna Johnson, "What in the World Is a MOOC?," *Washington Post*, Sept. 24, 2012, https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/campus-overload/post/what-in-the-world-is-a-mooc/2012/09/24/50751600-0662-11e2-858a-5311df86ab04_blog.html). It was thought that MOOCs would transform education and disrupt the status quo; this has not been the case. While MOOCs make university-quality lectures available to many, completion rates are low (although, it may be that people do not necessarily register with completion in mind); see Steve Kolowich, "Rethinking Low Completion Rates in MOOCs," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Dec. 8, 2014, <http://www.chronicle.com/blogs/wiredcampus/rethinking-low-completion-rates-in-moocs/55211>). While no longer seen as a threat to the more traditional classroom, MOOCs have had a positive impact on online education (see Phil Hill, "MOOCs Are Dead. Long Live Online Higher

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Chapter 8. Collaboration and Technology

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